

# GEIST

NUMBER 122

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FACT + FICTION  NORTH of AMERICA



## POPULATION: MORE OR LESS

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Things that Scatter ♦ Future Perfect ♦ In Search of a Phrase  
Safe Passage through Armageddon

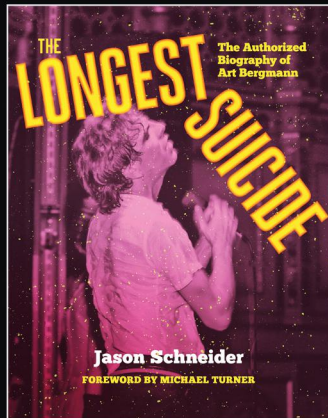




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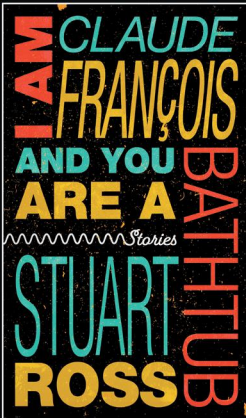


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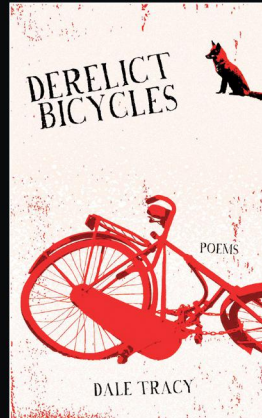


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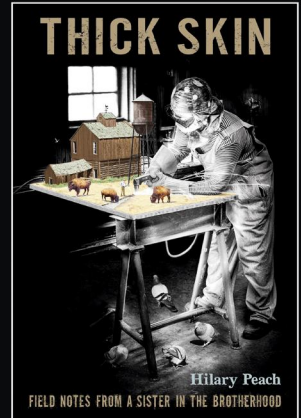


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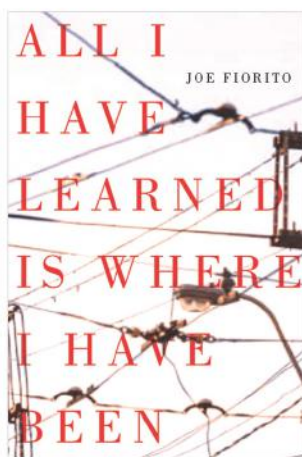




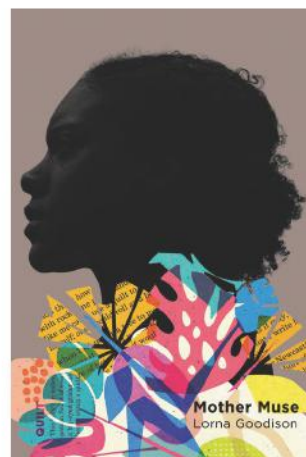
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# GEIST

Volume 30 • Number 122 • Winter 2022

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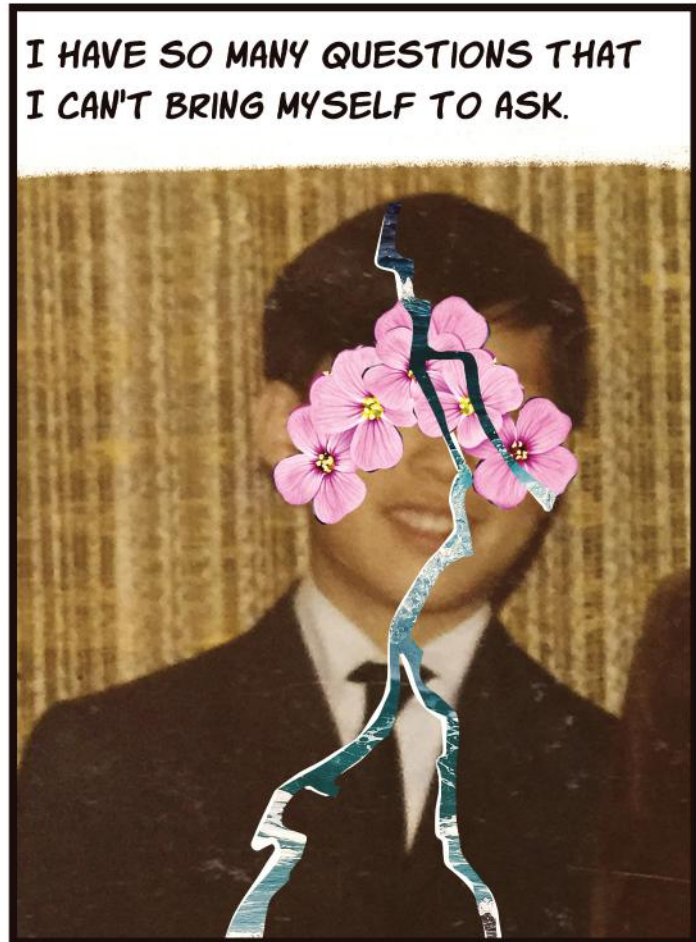
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# GEIST

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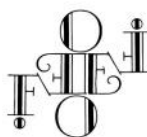
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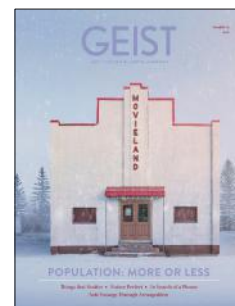
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COVER IMAGE: *Movieland, Saskatchewan, CA,*  
2020, photograph by David Burdeny, courtesy  
the artist and Kostuik Gallery.



**PUBLISHED BY**

The Geist Foundation

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## ONDEK



## PARTY ON

I just received No. 120 and am so glad to be back on your mailing list. Having not received anything for quite some time, I thought I'd been forgotten and all was lost. I really thought the party was over. So, welcome back and continue the good work. Your magazine is appreciated by us here in Philadelphia and the many other places we share each issue.  
—Gary N. Lutbran, Philadelphia PA

*Thanks for your patience, Gary! Rest assured; the party is far from over—we intend to keep it going for a long, long time.*

## GOOD-LOOKING

A great thing about *Geist* contributors is how practical they are. Like Grant Buday, who wrote “Reduce, Reuse, Reincarnate” (No. 121), working in a recycling depot. Enclosed is my latest book which, someday, will be dismembered

and pulped. No. 121 is a good-looking issue, but you need more comics. Hope *Winter of Our Pandemic* helps.  
—David Collier, Hamilton ON

*It certainly does, David.*



Excerpt from *Winter of Our Pandemic* (Spare Parts Press) by David Collier.



## WRITERS-IN-RESIDENCE

A big thank-you to Luca Cara Seccafien for their time as Geist's Writer-in-Residence. Luca is a writer, graphic storyteller/comic artist, printmaker, facilitator/teacher and community organizer. Find them at [luca.caraseccafien.com](http://luca.caraseccafien.com) and on Instagram @luca.secca.art. During their residency, Luca hosted two meetups for comix artists and worked on their long-form project. Their comix dispatch is set for publication in No. 123.

We would also like to welcome Christine Lai, our incoming Writer-in-Residence. Christine's short stories and essays have appeared in the *Puritan*, *Joyland*, *PRISM international* and *Cosmonauts Avenue*. Her debut novel, *Landscapes*, is forthcoming from Doubleday Canada in Spring 2023. We're looking forward to seeing what she gets up to during her time with us.

Keep an eye for future event announcements and opportunities at [geist.com](http://geist.com).

—The Editors

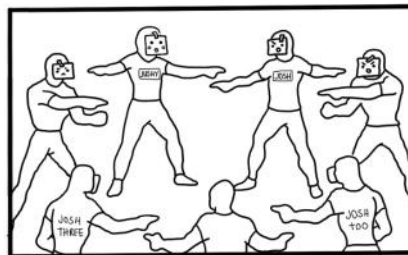
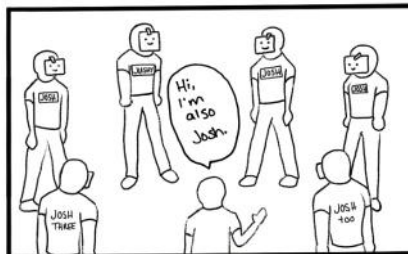
## CORRECTION

In our "Findings" section of No. 120, the photography of Kriss Munsya was mislabelled. "White Noise in Heaven" was published on the right-hand page, while "As the Dawn Breaks" was published on the left-hand page. We recant the edited artist statement featured in our caption, which was provided by the Gallery representative and not the artist.

## OVERHEARD BY GEIST

Our new obsession is eavesdropping. Send us the best one-liners you've overheard—on the street, in the park, in line at the grocery store—and you might see them in our next issue! If your one-liner is selected, we will sign you up for a complimentary one-year subscription to *Geist*. Submit at [geist.com/overheard](http://geist.com/overheard).

*Comix by Michelle Ha. Words overheard by anonymous Geist readers.*



### WRITE TO GEIST

✉ Thoughts, opinions, comments and queries are welcome and encouraged, and should be sent to:

The Editor, *Geist*

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#210 – 111 West Hastings Street

Vancouver BC V6B 1H4

Letters may be edited for clarity, brevity and decorum.

*Geist* is published four times a year.

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*Subscriptions:* in Canada: \$27 (1 year); in the United States: \$40; and elsewhere: \$45. Visa and MasterCard accepted.

Correspondence and inquiries: [subs@geist.com](mailto:subs@geist.com), [advertising@geist.com](mailto:advertising@geist.com), [letters@geist.com](mailto:letters@geist.com), [editor@geist.com](mailto:editor@geist.com).

Include SASE with Canadian postage or IRC with all submissions and queries. #210 – 111 West Hastings Street Vancouver BC Canada V6B 1H4 Submission guidelines are available at [geist.com](http://geist.com).

ISSN 1181-6554.

*Geist* swaps its subscriber list with other cultural magazines for one-time mailings. Please contact us if you prefer not to receive these mailings.

Publications Mail Agreement 40069678

Registration No. 07582

Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to: Circulation Department, #210 – 111 West Hastings Street Vancouver BC Canada V6B 1H4 Email: [geist@geist.com](mailto:geist@geist.com) Tel: (604) 681-9161, 1-888-GEIST-EH; Fax: (604) 677-6319; Web: [geist.com](http://geist.com)

*Geist* is a member of Magazines Canada and the Magazine Association of BC. Indexed in the *Canadian Literary Periodicals Index* and available on Proquest.

The Geist Foundation receives assistance from private donors, the Canada Council, the BC Arts Council, the City of Vancouver and the Cultural Human Resources Council.



Funded by the Government of Canada



**Derek Beaulieu's** visual poems can be found throughout this issue. They are from his series titled "Euphemia Asleep," from the poetry collection *Surface Tension*, published by Coach House Books in 2022. Derek Beaulieu is the author/editor of over twenty-five collections of poetry, prose and criticism. He is the 2022–2024 Banff Poet Laureate. Find him at [derekbeaulieu.ca](http://derekbeaulieu.ca).

**David Burdeny** is an award-winning photographer. His work has been exhibited in Canada, the United States and throughout Europe. His photographs have been published in *Casa Vogue*, the *Guardian*, *Corriere della Sera* and more. He lives in Delta, BC and works from his studio in Vancouver, BC. Find him at [davidburdeny.com](http://davidburdeny.com).

**Emily Chou's** work has appeared in *SAD Mag*, *Room*, *Vallum* and more. She's lived in the UK, Japan and Italy and currently finds herself back home on unceded x̣ẉməθḳẉəỵəm, Ṣḳẉx̣ẉú7mesh and ṣəḷiḷẉətal territory. Find her everywhere @rhymeswithwow.

**Martine Frossard** is a visual artist who focusses her work mainly on animation, illustration and participative installations. Her animated works have been presented in many festivals and galleries across Canada, the United States and Europe. Her animated film, *Thirty Masks* (2015), was an international success. Find her at [martinefrossard.com](http://martinefrossard.com).

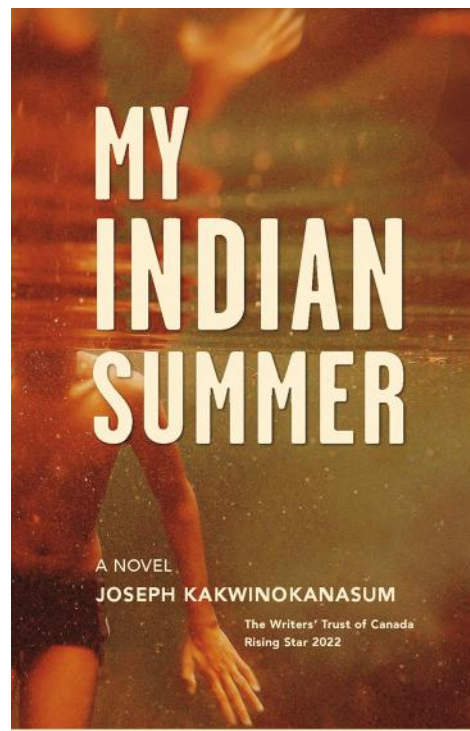
**Ján Juhaniak** is a visual artist who works in the fields of painting, graphics, collage, drawing, illustration and animation. He is also engaged in music production. He lives and works in Slovakia and France. Find him at [janjuhaniak.com](http://janjuhaniak.com) and on Instagram @jan\_juhaniak.

**Jess Richter** is a German-Canadian contemporary folk artist based in Regina, SK (Treaty 4 Territory). Her practice includes installation, site-specific work, printmaking and drawing. She holds an MFA from the University of Regina. Find her at [jessrichterprints.com](http://jessrichterprints.com) and on Instagram @haushexenstudio.

**Paul Wong** is an award-winning artist and curator. He is a media-maestro making art for site-specific spaces and screens of all sizes. He pioneered early visual and media art in Canada by founding several artist-run groups, leading public arts policy and organizing many events, festivals, conferences and public interventions. He lives in Vancouver, BC. Find him at [paulwongprojects.com](http://paulwongprojects.com).

His artworks on pages 20 and 21 of this issue are excerpted from *Occupying Chinatown* by Debbie Cheung, Christopher Lee and Paul Wong, published by On Main Gallery in 2021. The book was short-listed for the 2022 City of Vancouver Book Award. Visit [onmaingallery.ca/shop](http://onmaingallery.ca/shop) for more information.

**Ming Wu** is a photographer with a passion for music, arts and culture happening in and around his city. He lives in Ottawa, ON. Find him at [photogmusic.com](http://photogmusic.com) and on Twitter and Instagram @photogmusic.



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\$22.95 CA  
ISBN 978-1-990160-12-7



# NOTES & DISPATCHES

## Joe and Me

CB CAMPBELL

*Playing against the fastest chess player in the world*



A small crowd has gathered on Toronto's Gould Street beside Sam the Record Man. Everyone's attention is focussed on an old man seated at a table on the sidewalk. He yells, waves his hands, pushes his plastic chessmen violently around the board and slaps the time clock with another of his opponent's pieces after almost every move. He is a speed chess master named Josef "Joe" Smolij and we are witnessing him execute his "Smash-Crash" gambit.

Smolij has a long grey beard. He wears a tattered, dark red wool sweater with "KILL AS YOU GO" hand-printed on it. He presents his credentials for all to see: a cardboard poster featuring a faded newspaper photo of himself, a sketch of Socrates and a hand-lettered statement proclaiming that he is "the fastest chess player in the world."

Chess has a dignified and storied history; its origins extend back to the Gupta Empire of India in the sixth

century AD. By the time Columbus sailed to what became the West Indies, the game had migrated to Europe and the rules were approaching those we observe today. In 1846, the Toronto Chess Club came into being, formally establishing club play in the drawing rooms of what was to become the Province of Ontario.

The chess being played tonight on Gould Street is not a leisurely game carried out in a quiet club over afternoon tea. It is 2 a.m. on a drizzly

October night. The bars, peep shows and strip clubs along Yonge Street have closed. The doors of Sam the Record Man have been locked for hours, although, in a nod to the games taking place outside, the store leaves some lights on. Smolij crows as another defeated challenger gets up and fades back into the crowd around the table. I sit in the empty chair and slip my one-dollar bill under the chess clock. It's my first game of the night, but certainly not my first of the semester.

It's 1980 and I'm in Toronto pursuing Journalism at Ryerson Polytechnic Institute. The crowds and late-night lights of Yonge Street have grabbed my imagination and I've embraced the philosophy of the journalist as active observer. A photography assignment challenges me to capture some local colour. Smolij provides it.

I live a block away from Smolij's street theatre, so close to school that I seldom make it to my morning classes on time. I doubt I will ever be able to pound out sixty words a minute on an IBM Selectric. I've also twice forgotten to spell Young Street the way the locals do—"Yonge"—a sign of my flagging commitment to mastering the mundane mechanics required of first-year journalism students. But there are exciting stories to be written. A municipal election is coming; the Toronto mayoral race has progressive incumbent John Sewell defending against conservative Art Eggleton. In Ward 6, an openly gay businessman is attempting to take a seat on council. This generates debates and rallies for young journalists to cover, if only for their class assignments.

One night, while avoiding an assignment, I discover the Game

Spot: an arcade where I have my pick of dozens of pinball machines and console video games. There are more prurient offerings on the strip; just north of the chess tables, the Zanzibar offers table-dancers. But a ten-dollar cover charge and five-dollar drinks are beyond my budget. Instead, I play Galaga, Space Invaders and Kiss Pinball for the low, low price of a quarter. And another. And another—which is why I head home late most evenings with only a few dollars in my pocket. That's how I discover the late-night antics of Joe Smolij, a man whose commitment to chess is clearly greater than mine to journalism, or Pac-Man.



Chess is Smolij's passion, and how he makes his living. Each win earns him one dollar. He plays with a chess clock—a two-faced timer that tracks how long each player takes to make their moves. When a player's time runs out, a small metal flag drops, declaring them the loser. Smolij's games seldom end with checkmate. Far more often, a flag drops on the challenger. When our game starts, my clock has five minutes assigned; his has sixty seconds. Each time I move, I push the button on my side of the clock, stopping my time and restarting my opponent's.

I play a few games each night, studying Smolij's style and searching for tricks that will buy me enough

time to see the master's flag fall. Since Labour Day weekend, I've executed a number of strategies, but have not yet found one that works. No surprise, given that chess is a game that rewards experience and my opponent has spent every evening playing speed chess for over a decade. He has been on this corner for two years. Before that, he was playing a few blocks north at Allan Gardens.

Allan Gardens is home to a century-old conservatory with exotic plants in six greenhouses. Patrons can walk along paths and view the collection year-round. I've spent some time in the building with its warm, humid air. It reminds me of the cow barn at

home: a familiar earthy and organic smell, with just a hint of urine. Even so, it's a welcome change from the diesel and gas fumes of Carlton Street. Many of the patrons of Allan Gardens are homeless or near homeless, and sometimes shiftless. Back in 1978, the police were concerned about the crowds Smolij attracted, concluding he had to be a front for drug sales, not

believing that speed chess was a spectator sport. With some prodding from beat cops, he shifted south to Gould.

**T**onight we are playing on stone tables—street furniture that the city installed with the intention to gentrify and soften the urban landscape, to make Yonge Street into Family Fun Street rather than the street where people get their rocks off. Bylaws and rezoning have had some impact, but there are always dodgy characters hanging around at this time of the night. Although Smolij is the star performer, there are other players. Men, with their plastic pieces and clocks, claim tables, sometimes for a few hours, or, in Smolij's case, for the



evening. Some come regularly; others, only on weekends.

Two boards over, a young player seeks to emulate the master. Joel is perhaps in his early thirties, but his beard and hard-worn clothing add years. Joel worked in construction until he was injured. Unable to return to his day job, he turned to late-night speed chess to supplement his disability cheque. Although he usually wins, I've claimed a few dollars from him. For Joel, life is larger than the game. He's interested in more than chess, and we have become friends. In the spring we will work together in a weekly Dungeons & Dragons campaign, my paladin and his half-elf sharing adventures just slightly more violent than the street chess battles of Smolij and the night crew.

Few of the regulars put in long hours on the street. None are prepared to offer the time advantage that Smolij does. A few are "real" players, insisting on at least ten or fifteen minutes for each player per game to provide time to think and learn. The best among them tell me that playing speed chess will hurt any chance I might have of becoming a tournament player.

There is one man who comes occasionally, better dressed than the usual crowd and more skilled as well. He wants to play longer games, and his respect for Smolij is grudging at best. Smolij usually ignores him, but now and then he will mutter, "Club player." If it is late and a bad night, he will yell it.

Smolij's time as a club player is long behind him, but he did have his day. Born in 1921, he came to Canada from Poland in 1954. He is credited with five tournament games between 1956 and 1976; in 1959 he won the Ontario championship, allowing him an unsuccessful bid for the Canadian Championship. During those years, he was a machinist. He kept a chessboard close to his workstation. His

employer objected and in 1975 he was let go. Still unemployed, he earns money with his chess pieces and clock, spending long hours doing what he loves most.

And he does it very well. I've already used over three and a half of my five minutes, while Smolij is barely at fifteen seconds. There are five people watching us play, a couple of the regulars and a few wanderers, drawn, no doubt, by Smolij's energetic game commentaries. I grab my knight and bring it out, looking to build a wall of pieces that will take him time to chew through. Then I press down my button and my clock stops; his starts.

"This move? Yes, this move." Smolij begins his play-by-play. I've made him think. Three seconds later, he captures my knight with his bishop. "Hah. Kill as you go." He smashes my piece down on his button, restarting my clock.

With no time to think, I take his bishop with my pawn. I push down the button with his bishop, a petulant effort to send a message: two can play this game.

We frantically trade pieces, the clock buttons clicking like a metronome.

Less than a minute later, I capture his queen. This time, old man, I've got you.

"You kill my queen; I kill your king."

I realize he has advanced a pawn—he's now only one move away from promotion and check. Even with my advantage in pieces, my only option is a major sacrifice.

He may be down to just twenty seconds now, but I'm down to thirty. I make another move, hoping that I can execute the next few fast enough to hold him off.

I bring my queen into position and click the clock. He moves his other bishop across the board.

He uses my queen to push his button down and my clock restarts. I consider my options, desperate to slow him down.

Each game is fleeting, never lasting more than five minutes. Smolij is a permanent fixture on the corner. That winter, I am a frequent patron of his art. By the spring, my interest in journalism is fading. I realize how much I'm enjoying my economics course and how exciting it is to watch an election play out. I decide on Political Economy as a major and am accepted at a different school in a different city.

Smolij continues to play his nightly style of Smash-Crash chess until he fails to show up one February night in 1985. He is found unconscious in his rooming house, a victim of hypothermia and gall stones. His recovery takes place in a nursing home—he does not return to the corner. Instead, he puts his energy into teaching chess to his caregivers.

**T**hat night in 1980, the end of my lesson is near. I don't have enough material left to win. I don't even have enough pieces to block his pawn, just one move away from promotion. Desperate to buy time, I slide my last rook over to threaten his king. Without protection, it is gobbled up. I pull my last bishop back to buy more time. Even as I hit the clock, I know that, again, this is not my game. Smolij pushes his pawn forward and my clock is running again. Attempting one more delay, I draw my king behind a few surviving pawns, but Smolij shouts, "Time!" I'm just a putz playing the master—I've done well just to avoid checkmate.

He points to his sign, and I accept once again that I've lost to "the fastest chess player in the world." The game ends. Smolij takes my dollar from beneath his clock and smiles.

---

*CB Campbell was born in New Richmond, QC, and has migrated west through the Eastern Time Zone. He now writes and teaches in Thunder Bay, ON.*

# Heart Medicine

MAZZY SLEEP

i

It is a street that never  
Ends, ground tarmac  
Black against a blue sky  
Houses with low roofs  
Straightforward, stretched,  
Also the same  
Welcome to the suburbs,  
There are two kinds of mailboxes  
One with the last name Smith,  
And one with the last name Brown.

ii

You are a child in the middle of this  
Road. You are sure the moment  
You step forward you are making a choice,  
Even though the path only goes forward  
Here. Either you step off the road  
Or follow in his tracks.

iii

So many possibilities. You choose  
To decline them all. You weren't  
Supposed to see a lot of things,  
But that's not how we were made  
We have eyes. Other things  
Use other senses.

iv

Each house looks the same.  
Lemonade, picnics, a simple  
Life. Raise children,  
Obedient ones. Also, urban  
Areas. Neon lights.  
Less children. You know each  
Chapter has a location.  
You choose not to write,  
But time passes. People are waiting  
For the book.

v

You are counting. You are  
Playing a game. Numbers  
Drop one by one.  
Tink and drip. You open your  
Eyes. Where is everyone?

vi

First it looks more like a dream.  
You wish it was one. Flat tarmac road.  
Women drinking lemonades, young  
Girls trying on new nail polishes in the  
backyard.  
Boys playing sports. Then night. Not  
a single light in  
A single window. Beep. Wake up.

vii

You look behind every chair, search  
Every corner, open every drawer  
Ready or not here I come,  
You said. Looks like they were all  
Ready without you. You see  
The hands on the clock moving. After  
Awhile you cry because you're a child.  
You can't pull apart imaginary  
And friend.

viii

It wasn't supposed to be like this  
Everyone else looks happier.  
You know you only live once.  
You've already exhausted simple pleasure  
And knowledge cut into old wounds  
Then you tried consuming yourself  
The taste of a human mind  
Was like that of ash.

ix

Show me where it hurts,  
She said. At first  
You don't know where,  
Then you point to your  
Elbow. She kisses your knee.

x

You have bruises  
There was time  
You spent trying to  
Heal them.  
As in, time wasted.  
Your mother always said  
Every wound is just preparation  
For the next.  
As in, later on you go numb.  
You shut yourself off,  
You say words like  
Sentimental and  
...  
Is anyone home?

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*Mazzy Sleep is a ten-year-old from Toronto, ON who began writing during the pandemic. She has written over one thousand poems and short stories, as well as two feature screenplays and a novella. Her work has appeared or is forthcoming in Queen's Quarterly, Rattle, the Margins, Barren Magazine, Jellyfish Review and elsewhere. Find her at mazzysleep.com.*



# Red Flags

DAVID M. WALLACE

*The maple leaf no longer feels like a symbol of national pride*

When my publisher learned that I was planning a bicycle tour from Montréal to Victoria, they decided that I should use the opportunity to promote my debut novel, *The Little Brudders of Miséricorde*. The book is a dark comedy that features a francophone mouse and a recently retired anglophone school-teacher who is set adrift in an unfamiliar city. An improbable premise, but in some ways, it might be described as an affectionately profane spin on *Le Petit Prince*. And like the eponymous character of that slim volume who visits Earth and wonders if it is uninhabited, I also found myself travelling for some time without meeting anyone along the highway. Or, at least, anyone who was not safely ensconced inside a vehicle. My first encounter was not with a human at all, but with a black bear.

It was not a big bear and at first, I thought it might be a cub. It came loping out of the treeline on my right, running alongside the Trans-Canada Highway perhaps thirty metres from my bike. It looked like our paths might converge a little way ahead.

My first thought was: “Aww, cute.”

My second was: “If this is a cub, where’s the mother?”

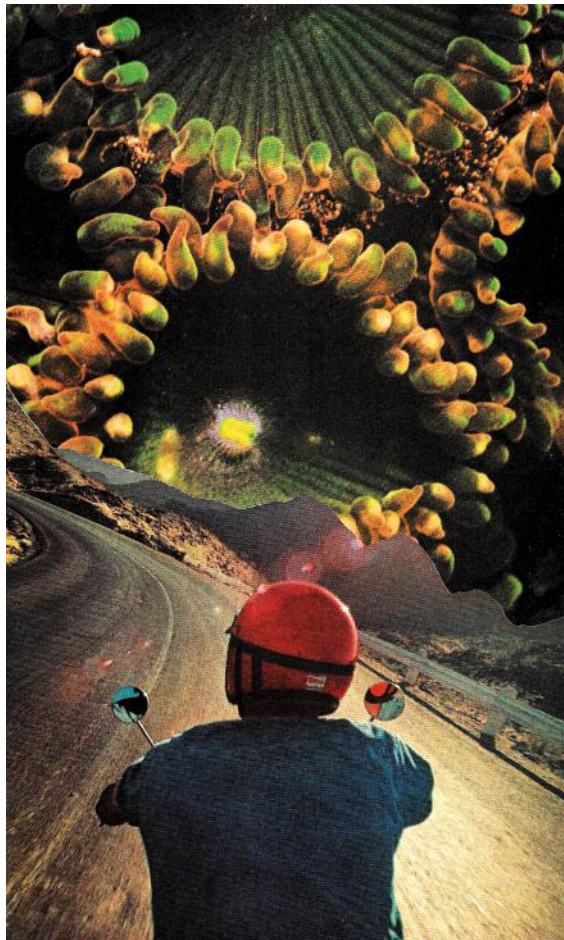
A transport passed. It was big and loud enough to send the bear back into the bush. The encounter was a moment of concern. Not fear, really, but unsettling enough that the next day I strapped on my bear spray.

Two days later, I met someone else who was not in a vehicle: a man, maybe early thirties, standing alongside the

Trans-Canada in the entrance to a highway construction site. He waved me down.

“Do you need water?” he shouted.

I pulled up next to his truck. My laden bike slid a little sideways on the loose gravel. We exchanged greetings. *Where you coming from? Montréal.*



*Where you heading? Victoria.*

He hauled out a Canadian Tire insulated ice box. I noted the bold red triangle and green maple leaf. He had water, Gatorade, soft drinks, granola bars.

“Take whatever you need.”

I had plenty of water but it was noon on an intensely hot day and a

couple hundred quick calories in a cold bottle was appealing. I chose a ginger ale.

“You’re going to pass James Topp.” He pointed west down the highway. “He’s only a couple of kilometres away.”

“I don’t think I know who James Topp is.” I cracked open the ginger ale and took a sip.

“He’s walking from Vancouver to Ottawa to protest vaccine mandates and to get restitution for those who were unfairly fired.” He was very excited.

It took me a moment to process what he was saying. Typically, someone cycling or walking across the country might be trying to raise awareness or fund research on PTSD, diabetes, reforestation or clean water. It appeared I had chanced upon an endeavour more attuned to the “Freedom Convoy” whose big rigs had rolled into Ottawa last January and noisily occupied the streets for a month, ostensibly to protest vaccine passports. Their grievances also appeared to include several far-right hobby-horses favoured by white supremacists. Widely shared on Twitter was a photo of an American confederate flag flying among the many Canadian maple leaves.

While cycling across Canada, you don’t routinely get offered cold water and soft drinks by strangers. I realized he was waiting for James Topp to pass so that he could supply refreshments. Though I didn’t

feel any sympathy for the cause he was supporting, I didn’t want to appear ungrateful.

“It’s been a really tough couple of years for everyone,” I said. I capped the ginger ale and slipped it into my front pannier.

“God bless you!” he shouted as I pulled away.

A few minutes later I caught sight of James Topp. He looked to be in his midforties. Orange and yellow safety vest. In the blistering heat, he was in trousers and boots and taking determined strides along the gravel shoulder. Trailing him, a little clutch of local supporters brandishing the Canadian flag at waist level like tag-team matadors. A young man with long yellow hair was photographing their approach.

“Living free!” the photographer said, and gave me a thumbs up. James Topp nodded gravely as I passed. It occurred to me that he had already walked nearly the distance that I planned to cycle. But, of course, he had a team. Sponsors, I suppose. Probably a Winnebago. A proper bed every night. Still, he had walked from Vancouver. *Walked.*

A little later I googled him. A few brief articles focussed on his complaints about the lack of mainstream media coverage. He had started at the Terry Fox Memorial in Vancouver. He planned to end his walk at the Ottawa Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Odd how self-proclaimed “freedom fighters” are willing to co-opt symbols of service but seem oblivious to the fact that their heroes made sacrifices for the common good and not in defence of individual privileges. Terry Fox’s Marathon of Hope envisioned a cure for cancer. Topp’s endeavour was the sort that risked prolonging a deadly pandemic.

From the news articles, it appeared Warrant Officer Topp (army reserves) was facing a court martial. *Conduct to the prejudice of good order and discipline.* It could include dismissal with disgrace and up to two years in prison.

While wearing his uniform, Topp posted two online videos criticizing COVID-19 vaccine requirements for military personnel and other federal employees. Which all seems strange, since military personnel are already required to be vaccinated for all the

usual diseases. They sometimes receive additional vaccinations if they are deployed overseas. Something to do with maintaining operational readiness.

A few hours later, some fifty kilometres farther west, there he was again. The guy who’d given me the ginger ale. He said he had passed me in his truck and decided to pull over to say hello once more. He smiled broadly and called me a real inspiration. Out came the ice box.

“Help yourself,” he said. “Anything you want.”

I took some ice cubes and plopped them into my water bottle. Somehow taking more would have made me feel complicit in a cause I can’t support.

“I don’t even know your name,” he said.

I told him and asked his.

“Vince.” We shook hands.

On some level, I liked Vince. To me he’d been kind and thoughtful and encouraging. He was doing what he thought was right. Believing in something. Maybe needing something to believe in. Maybe even thinking that I and many others believe the same things he does. Maybe he can’t see that he’s taken a marginal stance. I don’t think he’s a bad guy.

And apart from a little black bear, he was the only living creature that I’d met lately, along the side of the Trans-Canada, who wasn’t whizzing past in a vehicle. He, and James Topp with his little flag-toting entourage. All of them a little near-sighted and blundering along the highway. Only the bear, though, likely to be completely harmless. Vince wished me safe travels.

I spent nearly three months cycling the Trans-Canada. Several times I saw “F\*ck Trudeau” flags—oddly sinister—bold white letters on a black field. Stark as a skull and crossbones. A red maple leaf where I’ve inserted an asterisk. In the

aftermath of the Ottawa truckers’ protest, a kind of inchoate rage seems to have emerged from a disaffected minority of Canadians. I passed a house with a long banner declaring: “Thank-you, truckers, for making me a proud Canadian again.” More maple leaves. I saw “Freedom Fighter” emblazoned above the windshield of a semi. Maple leaves, again. I even met a guy outside a Petro-Canada who asked me if I was aware that the Freemasons are in league with the federal government and that, together, they are developing a new low-frequency sonic weapon to murder their enemies. A big, stylized maple leaf in the Petro-Can sign looming above him. Coincidence, I know, but...

Nations that have experienced the shame of a perverse patriotism (Germany, Japan) consider it socially unacceptable for private citizens to display the nation’s flag. In Canada, a faction of discontents appears to have co-opted the flag as a symbol of their anger. After three months pedalling across Canada, the maple leaf has become not a familiar emblem of national pride, but a kind of coded message between “freedom fighters.”

Nice guys, like Vince. Friendly, but full of a disquieting fervour. Generally white men, hurt and confused and looking to feel heroic in defence of the comfortable advantages they once exclusively enjoyed. Looking to equate patriotism with their own preferred traditions. Effacing the paradoxes of freedom and reducing it to mere individualism. And ultimately, inspiring dread, rather than pride, at the sight of a maple leaf.

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*Until his retirement, David M. Wallace was a secondary school teacher in Burnaby, BC. He now lives in Montréal, QC, scribbling poetry, prose and songs. He is an avid all-weather bicyclist.*



# PRESS 1 IF

DAVID SHESKIN

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DJSHESKIN

David Sheskin is a writer and artist who lives in Bethel, CT. His work has been published in numerous magazines, including the Dalhousie Review, Puerto del Sol, the Satirist and the Florida Review. His most recent book is David Sheskin's Cabinet of Curiosities.

# Scavengers

JENNILEE AUSTRIA

*That's one for the rice bag!*



When I was growing up in Sarnia, my family had a strange hobby.

On Sundays after church, we'd go to open houses. We were always the only immigrants there, but we held our dark heads high, knowing that we looked better than we would all week. Our crisply-pressed Sears outfits and pristine patent-leather Payless shoes were nothing like our pambahay—the battered sandos, baggy shorts, and rubber tsinelas we wore at home when our blinds were closed. That's when we reverted to the Filipino immigrant family we truly were: a scrappy blue-collar father from the Manila slums, a proud-but-underemployed mother with an untransferable teaching degree and two compliant girls growing up in a smelly Ontario oil refinery town.

At the open houses, we would tour the properties slowly, pressing our brown toes into the plush, cream-coloured carpets, running our hot fingers along the cool granite countertops, and marvelling at fridges with ice dispensers that spilled ice cubes all over the floor whenever we pressed the buttons too hard.

"We have one just like it at home, but at least ours has a built-in ice container," my father would say, wearing his white lies over his Sunday best.

As the real estate agent rushed to clean up the ice, I'd grab a can of 7UP and pocket as many cookies as I could.

But that wasn't the hobby.

When the open house was over, we'd come back to that empty house. I'd cover up my frilly church dress

with my sister's old Garfield shirt, change out of my shiny Mary Janes and pull on a pair of worn denim overalls that matched the ones my father put on over his own church clothes.

My mother and sister would stay in the car as lookouts.

"Make it quick," my sister would say, handing me two empty rice bags.

"Do we really have to do this?" my mother would hiss. "We don't want to ruin our good name."

"We're in Canada, remember?" my father would reply, swapping his fancy church shoes for a dusty pair of Nikes. "We don't even have a name!"

Trailing my father around the perimeter of the house, I'd put on the men's gloves he'd pilfered from the oil refinery that were too big even for him and keep my eyes glued to the ground. Around the new homes, the grass hadn't been laid yet, leaving dry, rough earth exposed.

And there, in that glorious dirt, were rocks.

When my parents came to Sarnia, the neighbours had a fancy garden installed by a landscaping company. There was a gurgling waterfall that trickled down into a pond, with the most beautiful border of rocks that curved along the water's edge, leading down to the corner of the yard where their property met ours.

The rocks were large and smooth to the touch, and I loved to hold them in my hands, feeling the weight in my palms before my mother scolded me: "We don't want them to say that immigrants are thieves, okay? We want them to think that we're good people!" She'd carefully put the rocks back, making sure to offer an apologetic wave in the direction of the neighbours' window, just in case they were looking.

When my father called the landscapers to inquire how much the rocks cost, they quoted him a figure higher than his entire refinery paycheck.

"Why pay for something we can scavenge for free?" he asked.



When we searched around the new houses, we could never find the same smooth, dark rocks that the neighbours had, so we grew to prefer the red, grey, and brown ones instead.

“Only pick the ones with white stripes,” my father would remind me. “Those are the ones that look expensive.”

Whenever I’d spot a perfect specimen, we’d squat down in the dirt and pour a bit of 7UP onto the rock. I’d hold my breath and watch the designs that would bloom across it like magic.

“Ang ganda!” my father would say. “That’s one for the rice bag!”

When the rock hunt was over, we’d haul our finds back to the car, peel off our dusty gear and drive back to our little bungalow on the outskirts of town.

And in the golden light of the setting sun, we’d place the rocks along the edge of our garden, imagining how they would look beside the flowers that would bloom there someday.

Whenever we saw the neighbours peering at us through their blinds, my parents would smile and wave at them.

“Girls, see how they’re watching us?” my father would ask. “They’re probably saying, ‘Look how they bought such lovely rocks in their lovely clothes! What a classy immigrant family!’”

But since they never spoke to us, we never really knew what they thought.

One thing we do know: years later, when my parents divorced and we moved away, the first thing those neighbours did was take our rocks.

Scavengers.

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*Jennilee Austria is a Filipina-Canadian writer, speaker and school board consultant who builds bridges between educators and Filipino families. Originally from Sarnia, ON, she now lives in downtown Toronto, where she still keeps an eye out for the prettiest rocks. Find her at [jennileeaustria.com](http://jennileeaustria.com) or on Instagram and Twitter @Jennilee\_A.*

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# FINDINGS

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Mari Lywd, 2018, *papercutting and gouache* and *The Black Princesses*, 2019, *papercutting and gouache* by Jess Richter. Influenced by British, German and Eastern-European folk ritual and tradition, Jess recontextualizes these practices within contemporary Saskatchewan to explore the submerged identities of German-Canadians in postwar, rural Canada.

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## Hostile Vibration

TARA MCGUIRE

*From* Holden After and Before: Love Letter for a Son Lost to Overdose *by* Tara McGuire. Published by Arsenal Pulp Press in 2022. Tara McGuire's work has been published in magazines and featured on CBC Radio. Holden After and Before is her first full-length work. She lives in North Vancouver, BC. Find her at [taramcguire.com](http://taramcguire.com).

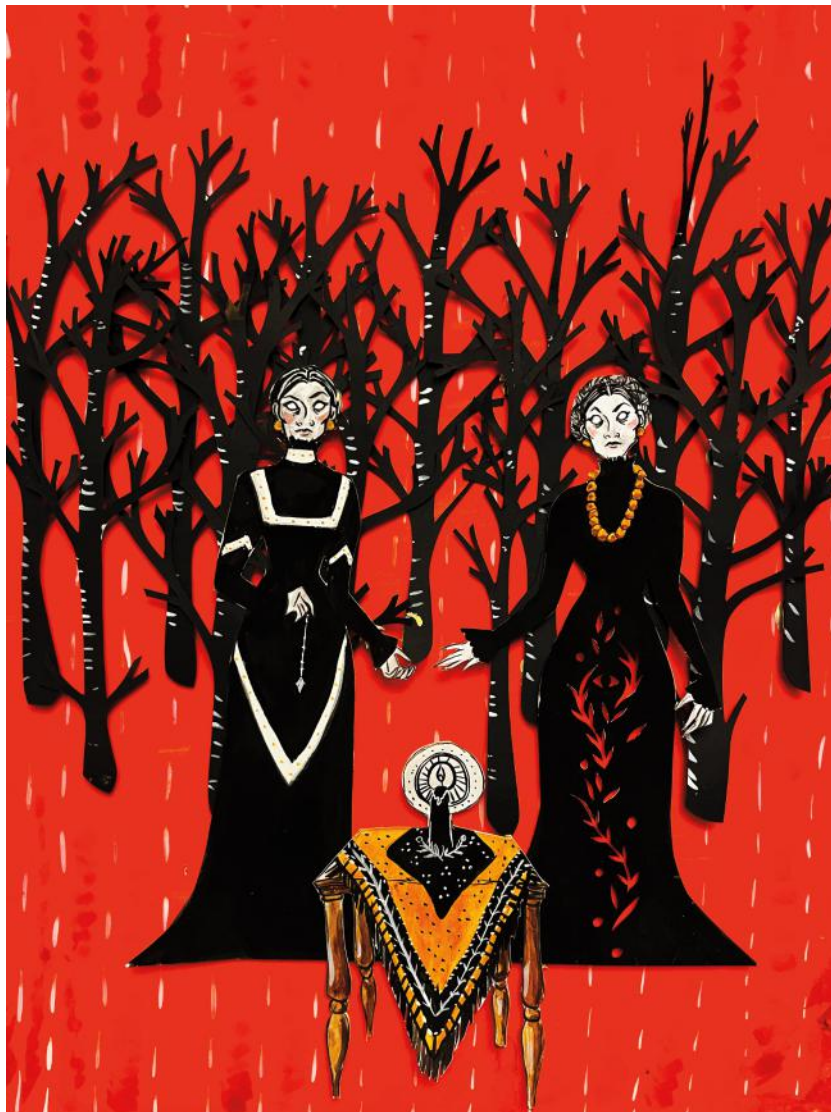
A layer of ripe-garbage smell hangs over everything, and the sky, what he can see of it, is oily gold, like it's been painted with a coat of melted butter. Holden's never experienced this kind of humidity before. Sweat expands across the back of his T-shirt,

and his jeans are stuck to his legs. He sees fire escapes and brick walls, dumpsters in alleyways, and rusty lampposts along the edge of the street. As they walk, he imagines tagging each object; his hand moves involuntarily, as if he's writing his name in the air in glossy white lines. He can even see the letters dripping as he and his mom continue on their way: *RuleR, RuleR, RuleR*. He inhales the fumes and the noise of New York City and realizes he's smiling. His shoulders are relaxing. The electric buzz inside his rib cage has been turned down to a three.

Holden tries to look up at the skyscrapers without tripping over the cracks in the sidewalk. They landed at JFK less than two hours ago, and already they're "out exploring."

Why do you always have to walk so fast? You're like a freakin' squirrel.





Holy shit! His mom stops abruptly in the middle of the wide sidewalk. She's looking up at the black awning above their heads. It's Birdland! She turns to him eagerly, but he has no idea why this place is significant. We have to go in! Every great jazz musician in the history of the world has played here. She pulls on Holden's arm.

Dude, we can't go in, it's a bar. He takes a step back from her, toward the curb, as if she's just asked him to help her to rob a bank.

How do you know? She shrugs. Maybe we can. Come on, let's try.

This is what he loves-hates about her. Always trying to weasel her way in. She doesn't "pay attention to the rules," which is what she's always telling him to do.

The doorman waves them through with a

bored nod. Before Holden can process what's happening, he's sitting at a table in what appears to be a jazz bar / restaurant combo. Waiters in jackets are delivering plates of food and trays of drinks. Instruments and music stands clutter the stage. Most of the people at the other tables are old and Black. He feels very not old, and very not Black. It's awkward and a bit exciting at the same time. I mean, he's in a club in NYC. And he's not even sixteen yet.

He leans back in his chair and looks around, hands resting loosely on his thighs. Yup, he's the youngest person here by like, a hundred years. He's incredibly uncomfortable—damp clothes, stiff chair, awkward silence. His mom is grinning at him from across the table. He forces a weak smile.

The waiter sets down two glasses of beer in front of his mom, because there's a two-drink minimum, and by "drink" they mean the dreaded alcohol. A fresh Coke fizzes in front of him, which is fucking ironic considering he's rarely allowed to drink the devil's sugar water at home. In his life he's probably consumed more beer than Coke. He's also eaten more zucchini muffins than chocolate cupcakes.

It would be so much better to be older. If he was older, one of those beers would sit in front of him, and he could signal the waiter to bring him another without anyone telling him he couldn't. But someone else, as usual, is calling the shots. He can't wait to be old enough to be in charge of himself. Then everything will be so much easier. If he was older, the lady eyeballing

him from across the table, her face tinted a faint orange by the thin strips of neon above the stage, would be younger, more interesting, and they would probably be getting shizzled. Maybe he would lean toward her, elbows on the table, closing the space between them. Maybe she would tilt forward, too, laughing at his hilarious banter.

There's something extremely distressing about going to your first bar with your goddamn mother. Completely and fundamentally wrong. Shouldn't a man's first trip to a bar be cooler than this? A milestone—like his first fuck. Something he can look back on later with pride, something he can brag about to his friends. It should not be sprung on him like a carjacking. This is so messed. His face hardens, and the familiar prickle and buzz begins to flare under his skin. He looks around, trying to figure out a possible escape. How can he stop this before it goes too far?

Maybe we should just go to Times Square, Momz? he says. Can't we go look at the cheesy lights? Can't we just go have a burger and call it a night? I'm tired.

We're here now, honey, we don't have to stay long, she says.

They've missed their chance. The band has taken the stage and is counting in a song he recognizes from his dad's CD collection, but can't quite peg. He will in a second, though. It's close. He can almost grab the title from the air just above and to the right of his mom's head. He's always been able to see music. As a little kid he could identify all the different instruments in the songs on the radio.

That one has violins and a saxophone. Do you hear the trumpet, Mama?

No, I don't. Mom would look over at him from the driver's seat. But I'm sure you're right.

Music has always been clear to him. Easy.

The dude on the stand-up bass is running an incredible riff, and even though the drummer is leading the rhythm section, he's working the snare beautifully from just a slight shade behind everyone else. Classic back-seat driver. The music envelops Holden and seeps into his muscles.

The wall behind his mom's head is filled with framed, signed portraits. He recognizes a lot of them: Parker, Mingus, Holiday, Davis, Fitzgerald. They've all performed on this stage just a few feet away. She's right, it is fucking amazing. He picks

## MARATHON

*From But the sun, and the ships, and the fish, and the waves by Conyer Clayton. Published by Anvil Press in 2022. Conyer Clayton is the author of We Shed Our Skin Like Dynamite (Guernica Editions), which won the 2021 Ottawa Book Award. She lives in Ottawa, ON. Find her at conyerclayton.com.*

I forgot to leave my husband, so I go on a run wearing only a giant shirt. It rains and I have no keys. I'm in a city, one I also forgot to leave, wet and whistled at, sober. I head inside a bar to dry off, when a man I once kissed while high on molly swings me in a circle, his hand on my hip. *Who are you again?* I ask, leaning dizzy into him, my pupils swallowing silence, remembering. *You don't know me*, he says. The bar is a tiny bedroom with windows instead of walls. The street is lined with bars like this. Everyone peers inside. I'm sober, I remind myself, and tell him I have a boyfriend—oh wait, actually I'm married. *I'm so unhappy though, it hardly counts*. We kiss and it's 2 a.m. I have to run home before husband's shift ends. This damn city has no cabs, but I hold my arm out as I sprint home anyway.

up his Coke, takes a sip, and there it is—he knows the song the band is playing. “Take Five” by Dave Brubeck. Nailed it.

His mom slowly surveys the room. Then she exhales, leans forward, sets her hand purposefully on the white tablecloth, and slides one of the glasses of beer toward him.

What the heck, she says, looking over her shoulder to check if anyone saw her.

Holden laughs out loud. He picks up the glass and is about to take a sip.

Wait! She raises her glass and holds it out toward him. Cheers! Happy almost birthday!

They drink as the band segues into Thelonious Monk’s “Body and Soul.” He gets that one in the first few notes.

Holden’s glass is empty long before hers. The music continues and another beer arrives, then another. Soon the neon lighting seems less offensive, the chair less hard against his back, and his mother’s voice less abrasive in his ears. He watches the band, noticing how all of their limbs are moving in rhythm, elbows jerking, knees rising and falling, heads bobbing in unison. They pass around the lead, communicating in subtle gestures. He can see the layers of music overlapping as the musicians work together to build something more beautiful and substantial than any of them could make by themselves.

The hostile vibration inside his rib cage drains away like spaghetti water through a strainer. Another beer and it becomes less work to smile back at his mom. She’s sitting there watching the band, her fingers keeping track of the beat on the tablecloth. She softly grins to herself, and her head dips in time with the beat.

Maybe the trip is a good idea for them after all. All that fighting with her and Cam about the homework thing, and the pot thing, and the girl in his room thing, and the stealing booze thing, and the sneaking out to paint thing, and the cops thing. He feels an involuntary surge of affection flood his chest. His mom tries so hard, but she doesn’t have a fucking clue. She doesn’t know him, and he can’t explain himself to her, so there’s always a space between what they both want and what they each have.

Clapping and cheers fill the void left by the fading vibration of the melody. The musicians

tenderly set down their instruments and walk off, like construction workers at the lunch whistle.

Coffee break for the band, his mom says. Have you had enough? We can go any time.

Sure, he says, though this seems like a good place to stay for a while.

She pays their tab with a green hundred-dollar bill, and when the waiter brings the change back, she hands Holden a twenty that looks to him exactly like the hundred she just paid with.

Here, in case we get separated. Not that we will.

He tucks the twenty into the front pocket of his jeans. Separated?

He follows her out through the club, down the red-carpeted stairs, through the heavy double door, and onto the street, where it’s not quite dark. A hint of azure drapes across the chunk of sky he can see.

Do you think you could find your way back to our place if you had to?

They’re not staying in a hotel. Some radical professor lady who Mom and Cam met at an Italian restaurant in Paris offered them her apartment. I mean, why you would go to an Italian restaurant in France, he has no idea. Apparently the apartment is rent controlled, which is a rare and noteworthy thing. From what he remembers, the building looks exactly like every other apartment on the street. Brown bricks, cement steps with wrought iron railings, black front door.

Sure I could.

Good. How would you get there?

I would ... He looks left and right, up and down the street. I would ... He has no fucking idea. Well, it’s on 72nd Avenue.

It’s on 75th Street. At Amsterdam, she says. You could take the subway to 72nd Street and walk from there. Remember that, 75th and Amsterdam.

Got it, 75th and Amsterdam.

But don’t worry, I’m not letting you out of my sight.

So, just like at home then. He laughs.

Yes, just like that. She laughs too, only bigger. She slips her arm through the bend of his elbow and they walk, linked together, toward the artificial glow of what he presumes is Times Square.







1940s



1960s



1990s



2000s



# Nothing for Money

JOSEPH KAKWINOKANASUM

*From My Indian Summer by Joseph Kakwinokanasum. Published by Tidewater Press in 2022. Joseph Kakwinokanasum is of Cree and Austrian descent. My Indian Summer is his first novel and is loosely based on his own childhood. He lives on Vancouver Island, BC. Find him at starblanketstoryteller.ca.*

1978 was the year Hunter learned about hunger. At the beginning of the summer holidays, he slept restlessly for the third night in the same jeans and T-shirt. Hunter thought his home life was like living in a battle; he had to be ready to move, always on the defensive.

A rush of water coursing through the pipes jarred him awake. He sat up slowly, feeling like he hadn't slept. His belly rumbled with hunger and he was dizzy, his head full of fog. Above, he heard the sound of his mother shuffling into the kitchen, then the noise of the faucet and a kettle being filled. The digital clock on his bedside table shone: 8:17. Margarete had gone out for groceries five days earlier and hadn't been seen again until eleven last night when she arrived with a party that lasted until four in the morning.

He was alone in the basement—with Noah away on his first season with the Wildfire Service, stress in the house had been reduced by half. He swung his feet over the edge. His jeans were rolled up to his knees, T-shirt twisted, white cotton tube socks, worn through at the heel, were rolled down to his ankles. Hunter slid his feet into the sneakers he'd left at his bedside, heard the phone ring and Margarete walk across the kitchen floor to the dining room, where the phone hung on the wall.

"*Tansi*," he heard her answer.

Hunter straightened his clothes on his way to the bathroom to pee. Upstairs he looked past the kitchen into the dining room and saw Margarete on the phone nursing her hangover and talking to someone in Cree. The house was a mess. Again.

In the bathroom, empty bottles and drink glasses pushed against the large mirror that ran the length of the counter. An ashtray full of half-smoked cigarettes and burned filters teetered at

the edge. He emptied the ashtray in the trash bin between the counter and the toilet. He pissed, leaving a bit of piddle on the toilet seat. He wiped it off with his socked foot, washed his hands and walked to the kitchen. The kettle had just begun to boil. He made a cup of sweet tea. On the kitchen table was a half-eaten bowl of Deb's porridge. Hunter looked at it: breakfast. Deb was long gone, on the early shift at the Blue Sky Restaurant in Dawson Creek where she had a part-time job.

Besides the empty bottles piled in the kitchen sink, a case of empty stubbies and a spent twenty-six-ounce bottle of Crown Royal sat on the counter. Hunter dragged his feet to the living room, knowing that he'd have to clean his mother's mess or risk getting a licking. He joined Kitty, a massive orange tabby with his balls intact and an attitude to prove it, on the old couch and pulled the throw from the frayed armrest over himself.

He listened to his mother speak a language he hardly understood. The inflections, timbre, in her voice, he couldn't grasp. One phrase he knew well. "*Mukwey soniyaw*," he heard her say. Nothing for money. Margarete talked for several minutes, and at the end of the conversation laughed, "*Eksetigway, echagen*." She hung up the phone.

She moved into the living room, not looking at him. She rummaged through the records beside the ancient hi-fi and put one on. Country. Hunter hated most country. Margarete walked down the hall to the bathroom. The music blared, and Hunter followed. Margarete opened her makeup kit on the bathroom counter, leaned close to the mirror and applied her eyebrows. She hummed the song playing on the stereo. Merle Haggard.

"Why don't you teach us how to speak Cree?" asked Hunter.

"It's pointless," she said. "Nobody speaks the language anymore."

"You speak it with all your friends," replied Hunter.

"*Wushte!*" she said. "Get out of here." Margarete swatted at him like he was a mosquito.

Hunter ducked and went back to the dining room. He sat at the table, close to the phone. He glanced between the wall-mounted analogue



clock and the phone. It was a couple of minutes to nine. Outside, magpies and ravens squawked, signalling the warming air as morning light poured through the windows. The phone rang, and Hunter picked it up mid-ring. It was Jacob and Eric, on the party line. The three friends had arranged the call the day before.

“Where you want to meet?” asked Jacob.

“We can meet at McDonald’s,” said Eric.

“Can’t. *No money*,” said Hunter.

“Is your mom home?” asked Jacob.

“Yeah, maybe she has some money,” said Eric.

Hunter cupped his hand over his mouth and the receiver. “I just heard her say *mukwey soniyaw*,” he whispered. “That means she’s got no money.”

“Not even a couple quarters?” asked Eric, exaggerated disbelief in his voice.

Jacob snapped, “If he said she’s broke, she’s broke.”

“Then where are we going to meet?” asked Eric.

“Let’s meet at the museum,” said Hunter.

“Ten minutes?” asked Jacob. The boys agreed and hung up.

Margarette walked into the kitchen. She had managed to change into a clean outfit of chestnut brown polyester pants and a baggy floral print top. Hunter, still sitting at the kitchen table, kept one eye on his mother across the room.

“Can I have a couple of quarters, Mom?” Hunter spoke over the record player.

“What, do I look like a bank?” said Margarette. “Look,” she pointed at the pile of bottles beside her, “gotta be at least four bits there. Take those back. And clean up this damned mess.”

Someone knocked. “*Austum*,” yelled Margarette. Carol and Ingrid walked through the front door.

“*Tansi*,” said Carol, who lived two blocks down the street. Hunter didn’t say hello to his mother’s drinking buddies, just picked up the case of stubbies and carried it outside. Moments later Margarette and her friends descended the front steps, chattering in Cree.

“You be good this weekend!” Margarette pointed a long slender finger at Hunter. He didn’t ask where she was going. There was no point. He knew. But he didn’t know when she’d be back. Or if she would bring groceries. They piled into the Pontiac and sped off towards the city.



## WAYS TO DEAL WITH WORRY

*From Dream of Me as Water by David Ly. Published by Palimpsest Press in 2022. David Ly is the author of Mythical Man (Palimpsest Press) and the co-editor of Queer Little Nightmares (Arsenal Pulp Press).*

1. Write your worries on sticky notes. Throw them on the ground and draw a circle around them. Sprinkle salt onto the circle to light it on fire.
2. Start by texting, “I’m worried that...” in a message to yourself. Think about how sweet pecan pie is, and allow autofill to do the rest.
3. Leave a bottle outside during a storm and see how much lightning you can catch. When it’s just about full, take a sip. If you’re still thirsty, move on to #9.
4. Uninstall Twitter.
5. Actually, just throw your phone into the circle with the sticky notes.
6. Put on *Our Planet* and listen to David Attenborough explain how sea grass absorbs carbon dioxide to counteract the warming of shallow seas, and then sulk about the death of the Earth.
7. Lay in bed and listen to Greta Svabo Bech; how she pulls poetry set to Ludovico Einaudi’s “Experience” and wonder about how you could work it into a poem.
8. Finally bathe your healing crystals in moonlight. Think about how they haven’t made you feel better before.
9. Drink some water to see if it helps. If you find that you’re still thirsty, go back and try #1 again.
10. Make a list of ten random points over the course of two weeks to get your mind off of the constant worry you feel for no apparent reason.

# Safe Passage through Armageddon

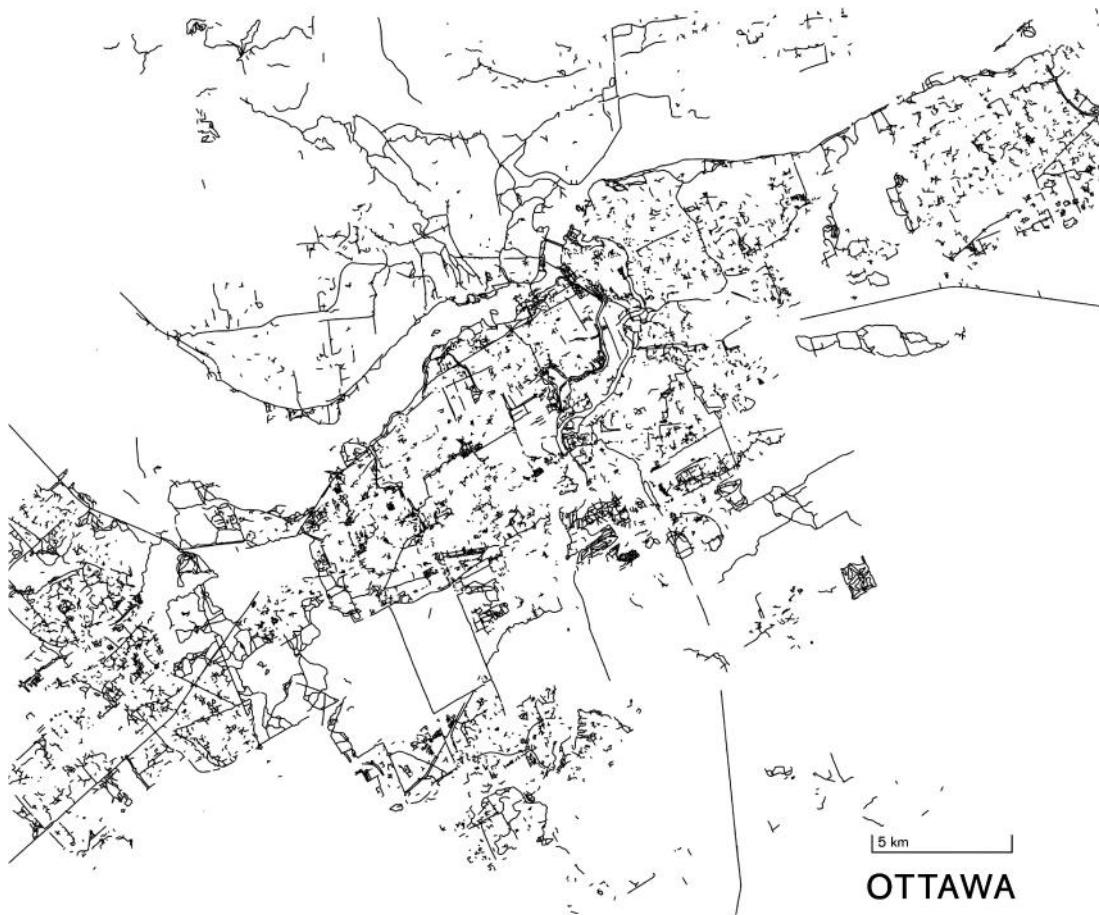
TREE ABRAHAM

*From Cyclettes by Tree Abraham. Published by Book\*bug Press in 2022. Tree Abraham is a queer writer, book designer and maker of things. She was born in Ottawa and lives in Brooklyn, NY. Find her at treeabraham.com.*

(40) There are 980 kilometres of pathways in Ottawa—a labyrinthine network weaving around and through its sprawling bounds, past waterways and into forests, parks, and neighbourhoods. It felt like a lifetime could be spent cycling in Ottawa without ever repeating the same route. I would regularly go explore these paths for several hours at a time in the Ottawa-Gatineau region, hardly encountering another person or car crossing. So much of the city's sublime is found only in a hidden freeze-frame tucked along these dense routes. I would turn a bend and be confronted with a wooden bridge and stream glistening through diffused rays, or a lake edged with willows, or a boardwalk under a canopy of autumnal trees scattering colour.

Some beauty is visible only when abutted by banality. Spots beautiful in a specific time, direction, and angle viewed from bike-height that couldn't be replicated. No matter how much I loved a new place, I rarely, if ever, returned to it. I thought there was too much else in the world to justify circling back around. I always wanted more and varied novelties to sample. The highlight reel of my plentiful and fleeting bike rides in Ottawa survive now only in sensation, not sight

(41) Maybe cycling is bred into Canadian citizenry. Canada has the longest recreational path in the world—the Great Trail—twenty-four thousand kilometres meandering across to the Atlantic, Pacific, and Arctic coasts. The trail links up 80 percent of the population and 100 percent of my Canada-dwelling friends. It feels like a lighthouse that could guide me to safety if I were a fugitive, or a rare survivor of a pandemic or regional alien invasion or nuclear explosion. I could follow the trail from Ottawa to loved ones in Toronto, Thunder Bay, Calgary, Nelson, Vancouver, Victoria, or Whitehorse. A significantly lengthier commute than with a plane or a car, but in an Armageddon, I would have time, and a bike unaffected by power outages or fuel shortages to secure safe passage.





# Generational Resilience

*From Tsqelmucwíl: The Kamloops Indian Residential School—Resistance and a Reckoning by Celia Haig-Brown, Garry Gottfriedson, Randy Fred and the KIRS Survivors. Published by Arsenal Pulp Press in 2022. Haig-Brown is an educator and the author of Resistance and Renewal: Surviving the Indian Residential School (Arsenal Pulp Press). Find more of Celia's and Randy's work at [geist.com](http://geist.com).*

*The following excerpt is written by Paul F. Michel and Dr. Katbryn A. Michel, children of Joe and Anna Michel. Anna Michel was born in 1931 and attended KIRS from 1940–1951.*

On May 27, 2021, we heard there would be an announcement later that day that 215 unmarked graves had been detected by radar at the Kamloops Indian Residential School site. The news was horrifying and tragic but, unfortunately, not shocking. As children of parents who attended the school, we had heard enough stories to sense the magnitude of the traumas and abuses experienced there. In Celia Haig-Brown's book *Resistance and Renewal*, our parents, Anna Michel (Yelqotkwe) and the late Joe Stanley Michel (Cicwelst) shared some of their experiences at the school. When we read their stories, we knew that they had only told the parts they were able or willing to share. Although our parents lived their lives in the shadow of shame and of hurtful, horrifying memories, our father would only talk about his positive experiences at KIRS—his role as advocate, protector, and academic. He would never discuss the abuse he suffered, and ultimately, he took his secrets with him when he passed away. Our mother's memories of the school were often sanitized as a form of self-preservation. She mostly says, "Residential school was good, and it taught us to speak English and to get good jobs." However, sometimes she would share that every time she returned to the school and stared at the white ceilings, "It was like a knife piercing my heart." As children of two residential school survivors, we are acutely aware of the struggles our parents went through and that in many respects, their silence was in fact resilience. We are fortunate that their resilience propelled them to do more than just survive, as they became respected leaders in education and shared their knowledge of Secwépmc culture and language with others.

The primary importance of resistance was to survive the residential school; the secondary mission was to shed the negative influences of those

early horrors and abuses. Both our parents lived their lives in duality; they were hindered early in life by shameful thoughts of "being Indian." At the school, they were strongly encouraged to embrace the safety of assimilation by moving

## VANCOUVERING

*From First-Time Listener by Jennifer Zilm. Published by Guernica Editions in 2022. Jennifer Zilm is the author of Waiting Room (Book\*bug Press) and The Missing Field (Guernica Editions). She lives in the Greater Surrey Area, BC. Find her at [jenniferzilm.com](http://jenniferzilm.com).*

If only someone had catalogued the West End rooms we lingered in before we knew each other. The studio apartments are obsolete, skyline a museum of windows, gloaming's pink container.

The summer ephemeral, splattered with rainsplaining. Think about it. Threshold seasons name themselves with verbs. Each year, spring slightly earlier, renovicting winter. *Clean lines*, the designers say. *Love or List*, but I want to count the ways

neighbourhoods change their names  
faster than you do. *New East Crackton*  
became *Railtown* before I realized  
we'd stopped snorting coke. I sometimes  
doubt that the cluttered stanzas we inhabited  
ever existed. It was easy to forget

to pay for the SkyTrain with no ticket  
-taker, but now we find new ways  
to thwart the turnstiles. Arms linked,  
we pay one fare so we can ride together.  
Busing the road deep east, down Cordova;

yesterday a stranger beside me completing  
her dialectical behaviour therapy homework,  
today a boy in all black reading *The Secret Agent*,  
the chapter heading "East Meets West"—but he got off  
before Main Street. You say the city is best

seen in alleys. Discarded bricks, rotting softwood,  
bubblegum fiberglass—you salvage materials  
to build a miniature house as memorial  
to all the rooms that may never have existed  
in time before we knew each other.

away from their old ways. In many respects, they were the poster children of assimilation. Our father became an accomplished teacher, counsellor, and community leader. And our mother's dream of having all nine of her children graduate high school was more than fulfilled when eight out of the nine went on to complete university degrees. As children, we all understood the "role" we were to play in society and that sacrifices had been made by our parents' generation to make our way easier. Unfortunately, the children of the survivors of Indian residential schools also had to overcome shame, violence, and negativity in their own struggles of resistance and renewal.

Although we have each taken different paths—one as Special Advisor to the President on Indigenous Matters at Thompson Rivers University, the other as a professor teaching the Secwépemc language—we both have witnessed the power of resistance and have experienced the healing of renewal. Some in our family have found a path through their careers and through giving back to others, some through finding their identities as Secwépemc through language, songs, stories, and traditions. Our parents once again helped lead the way by devoting their retirement years to teaching the language, stories, and teachings to hundreds of children attending Chief Atahm School, a Secwépemc immersion school started in 1991. Through their role as Elders, we were finally able to see all sides of them. Their talents as storytellers, singers, historians, and teachers were no longer hidden. Without a doubt, renewal of our

Secwépemc language, our connections to our land, and to each other are the keys to survival.

On the anniversary of *Resistance and Renewal*, which chronicled the experiences of thirteen KIRS survivors, we, as children of survivors, would like to attest that resistance is a continuous process and that renewal is not only possible, but imperative. The book foreshadowed the tragedy of the unmarked graves, which exposed decades of abuses. It is within such tragedies that we need to find our strength to move forward as a way of honouring the innocent lives lost.

**Paul F. Michel** belongs to the Secwépemc Nation and is traditionally from Cstélen (Adams Lake First Nation). Paul is honoured to be working as Special Advisor to the President on Indigenous Matters at Thompson Rivers University, and he recognizes that this wonderful university is situated in the traditional territory of Tk'emlúps. Paul has broad-based Indigenous experience in the areas of administration, student support services, university instruction, Indigenous research, and governance.

**Dr. Kathryn A. Michel** writes, "I am a Secwépemc woman. I weave my identity around my land, my Nation, and my family. My journey has led me to live my life working to help revitalize the Secwépemc language through immersion education." Dr. Michel currently teaches the Secwépemc language to babies in the Chief Atahm School language nest and to adults in the Stselxméms r Secwépemc Institute.

---

## The Day I Gave My Candelabra to the People

RIVER HALEN

*From Dream Rooms by River Halen. Published by Book\*bug Press in 2022. River Halen's work has been published in Canada, the United States, Australia and Japan. Their first book, Match (Coach House Books), was shortlisted for the Trillium Book Award for Poetry. They live in Tiobtià:ke (Montréal). Find them at riverhalen.net.*

When I was fourteen, my friend, who was fifteen, lost her earring in shag carpet. We searched on hands and knees until our faces came close. I had an impulse, unpremeditated, to lunge forward and put my lips on hers, which I almost did. It was terrifying how close I came to risking everything. The shag carpet was green and endless. I remember the way it felt between my panicked fingers. My friend was looking for her earring, which she never found. I was looking for a pretext, which found me first and then I ran from it. We stayed in that landscape for years. The first time I kissed a woman I was eighteen and denied any sexual intent—we were just being "friendly." Three months later, when she said she had feelings for me I told her I loved her too but wasn't queer. She knew I was lying. I

believed in my lie so fully I was innocent. We stayed in this strange sort of impasse, kissing drunkenly up against walls when we got the chance. The first time I kissed a woman with intent I was twenty-two and drunk on a bottle of homemade fruit wine with outrageous alcohol content my dad had given me shortly after my grandmother’s funeral. In my grandmother’s home there was green shag carpeting too, wall to wall, concealing who knows how many lost objects. The first woman I kissed with intent had a hard-to-find clit, or I was just that inexperienced. I remember having to reach for it under the shelf of her pubic bone, so much lower than I’d thought, hidden under hair. I am not going to say it was like a pearl. I am not going to say it belonged on my high school friend’s ear. There was this sense of the landscape ending.

I dated gay men too. Their friends didn’t like me—there was this joke that I was working for the Christian right. I dated several people who have since come out as trans. When I think back on times I dated gay men or straight women I wonder if it was me or them who broke the promise on the label. The day I gave my candelabra to the people was unremarkable except for the fact that I had realized I could. I took it to the thrift store a ten-minute walk down the road, along with some shirts I didn’t like anymore and some Mason jars I wasn’t using and a container of lamp oil I had bought back when I thought the solution to my pained emotions about my dad’s pretty oil lamp was to keep lighting it. (I had already given away the oil lamp.) The people had done nothing to deserve the candelabra, which was simultaneously a priceless historical artifact, evidence, a heavy burden, and a decoration in medium-questionable taste (the grapes!) likely to fetch a maximum of four to five dollars, the after-overhead fraction of which would be donated to a shelter for women experiencing violence. (How the shelter defined “women” and “violence” was something I did not know, and I hoped that if they were the kind of place that would tell people their bodies or experiences didn’t register, my candelabra would haunt them from fiscal year to fiscal year until they understood something.) I had done nothing to deserve my candelabra either. I left it in a white box with a lid at the entrance of the thrift store and went home and eventually made some dinner. While I cooked, I fantasized about calling the shelter to discuss the case of someone like me in the event of a sudden loss of safety. In the fantasy, I was

extremely convincing—they agreed to drop the word “women” from their name and put trans people in positions of leadership, and when the violence broke out I moved in along with all kinds of gender-marginalized people and none of us were gendered from the outside any longer. My candelabra sold for a million dollars at auction, and we bought nice furniture for our house.

## Population: More or Less

*Justin McElroy, a CBC journalist and well-known ranker of stuff, and a group of friends (Andrew Bates, Gerald Deo, Steve Masuch, Laura Rodgers and Hans Seidemann) ranked more than 186 welcome signs from around British Columbia on Twitter in April 2022. They scored each community’s sign out of ten. Up to six points were awarded for charm, which was judged based on the sign’s employment of interesting design and materials, relevance to the town’s culture, inclusion of a unique and authentic motto and sense of whimsy or playfulness. The remaining four points were awarded for practicality, which was judged based on whether the sign clearly communicates that you’re entering the town, high visibility of the sign and emphasis on the town’s name.*



### 45. WARFIELD

- great newspaper comics page energy here
- the shiny orb in the middle (please do not correct me) is wonderful
- imagine 90% of the kootenays would disagree with the claim but that’s okay! you live your best life warfield!





#### 6. CHETWYND

- heck yes these bears
- they're so good and the big log is so big
- chetwynd's whole deal is chainsaw carvings so this works (though underexplained)
- you're allowed cursive on the sign when the word is two letters long



#### 4. TAHSIS

- if you're not chuckling at this entire sign's entire deal then we can't be friends
- not only funny but a unique design done really well—and that sawmill blade!
- more of a fun joke than something that lets people know where they are and what it's about



#### 1. QUESNEL

- the motto is accurate and fun
- and the motto informs the sign
- and the sign is large and uncluttered
- and has nice flourishes around it

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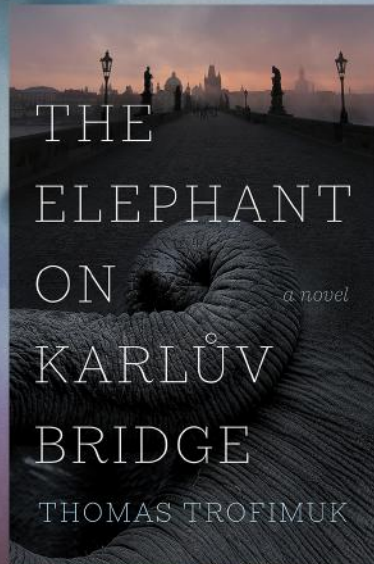
Thistledown  
Press

FALL 2022

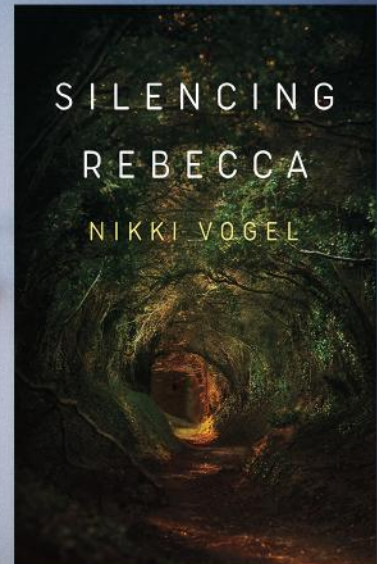


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## BlackFlash



Cover: Zachary Ayotte, *Untitled* from "Notes on Digging a Hole," 2020. Courtesy of the artist.

# My Dad's Brother

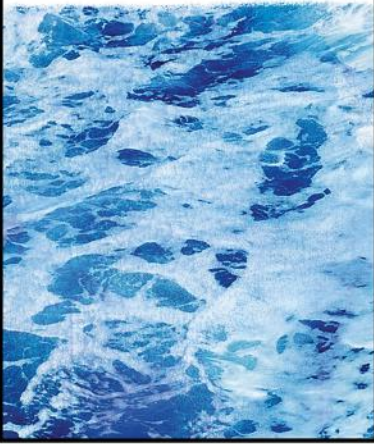


**(Or What Does Drowning Look Like)**

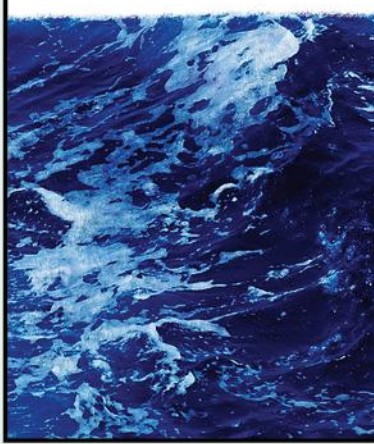
EMILY CHOU



MY DAD DIDN'T TELL ME ABOUT HIS OLDER BROTHER UNTIL I WAS 15.



BUT WHEN HE TOLD ME, I REALIZED THAT I HAD ALWAYS KNOWN.



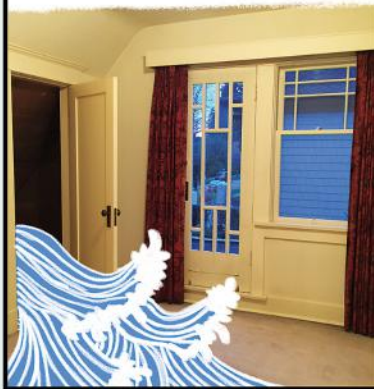
THERE WERE THREE CLUES:



1. THE SPARE ROOM IN MY GRANDPARENTS' HOUSE WAS FULL OF RECORDS WITH THE NAME "EDWARD" WRITTEN ON THE BACK. MY DAD ALWAYS SAID THEY BELONGED TO A COUSIN.



2. THE SPARE ROOM ITSELF, WITH ITS DIECAST CARS AND SINGLE BED, LOOKED LIKE IT SHOULD BELONG TO A TEENAGE BOY.



MY DAD SOMETIMES CLAIMED IT WAS HIS ROOM, BUT I KNEW HIS ROOM WAS DOWN THE HALL.



IT WAS LIKE HE COULDN'T KEEP HIS STORY STRAIGHT.

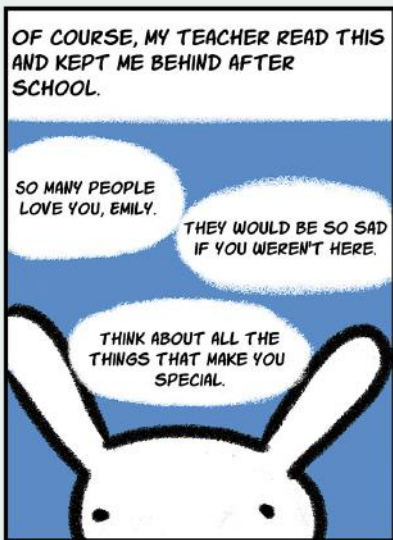
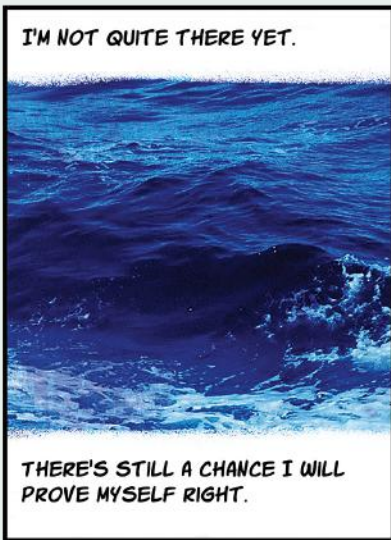
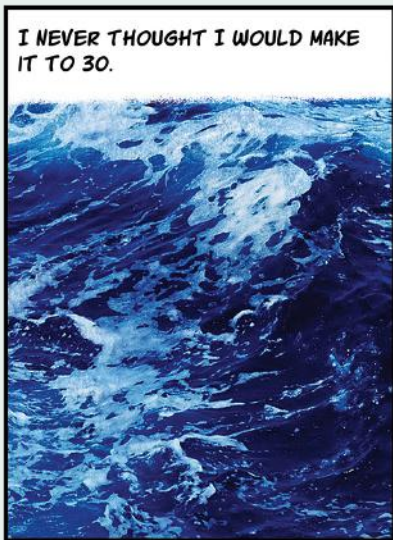
3. ONCE, WHEN I WAS VERY YOUNG, I OVERHEARD MY GRANDMA TALKING TO A GUEST ABOUT HER CHILDREN.



I HAVE 4 KIDS, BUT ONE OF THEM IS IN HEAVEN.

LOOKING BACK NOW IT ALL SEEMS SO OBVIOUS. WHAT REASON DID THEY HAVE TO LIE?







MY DAD HAS 3 SIBLINGS:



JONATHAN, HIS YOUNGER BROTHER.



REBECCA, HIS OLDER SISTER.



EDWARD, HIS OLDER BROTHER. THE FIRST TIME MY DAD TOLD ME ABOUT HIM, HE SAID THAT EDWARD WENT MISSING AS A TEENAGER.

THIS, I FOUND OUT LATER, WAS ALSO NOT TRUE. EDWARD KILLED HIMSELF.



AFTER EDWARD DIED, MY GRANDPA NEVER SPOKE OF HIM AGAIN.

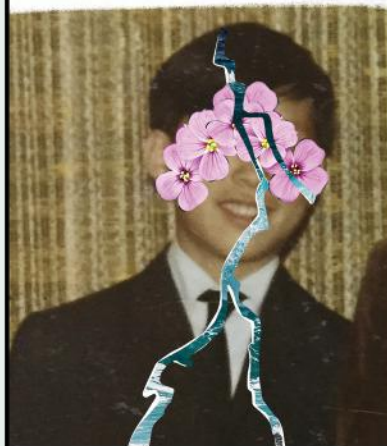


JONATHAN AND REBECCA DONT TALK ABOUT HIM EITHER, BUT THEY BARELY EVEN TALK TO ME.

I SEE THE SCAR EDWARD'S DEATH LEFT ON MY DAD, A WOUND THAT NEVER HEALED.



I HAVE SO MANY QUESTIONS THAT I CAN'T BRING MYSELF TO ASK.



I'M NOT SURE WHY I'M SO SCARED.



OF ALL THE WAYS I'VE THOUGHT  
TO KILL MYSELF, DROWNING ALWAYS  
SEEMED LIKE THE BEST OPTION.



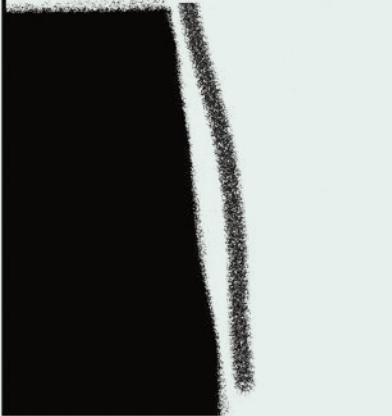
I'M A STRONG SWIMMER.



I LIKE THE IRONY OF IT.

I'VE HEARD THAT DROWNING IS  
A PAINFUL WAY TO DIE.

IT FEELS LIKE YOU'RE BREATHING  
FIRE.



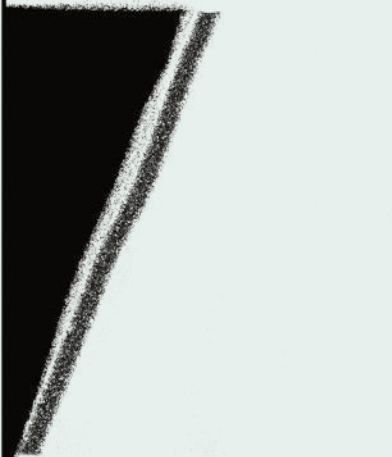
IT FEELS LIKE YOU WEIGH A  
THOUSAND POUNDS.



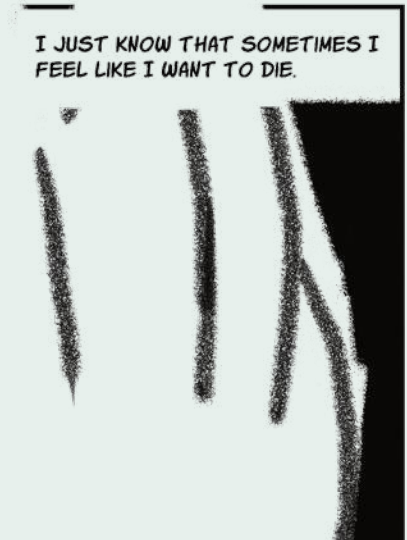
IT FEELS LIKE THE WORLD IS  
COLLAPSING AROUND YOU.



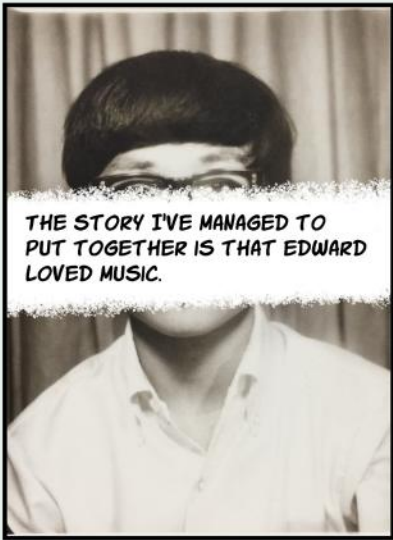
I DON'T KNOW ABOUT ALL OF THAT.



I JUST KNOW THAT SOMETIMES I  
FEEL LIKE I WANT TO DIE.



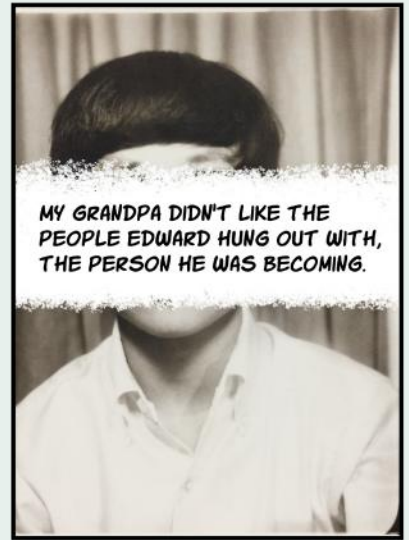




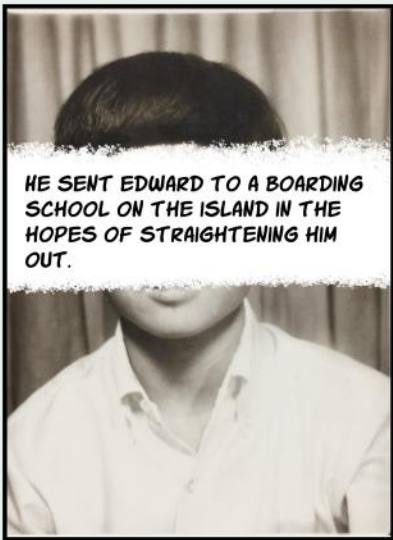
THE STORY I'VE MANAGED TO PUT TOGETHER IS THAT EDWARD LOVED MUSIC.



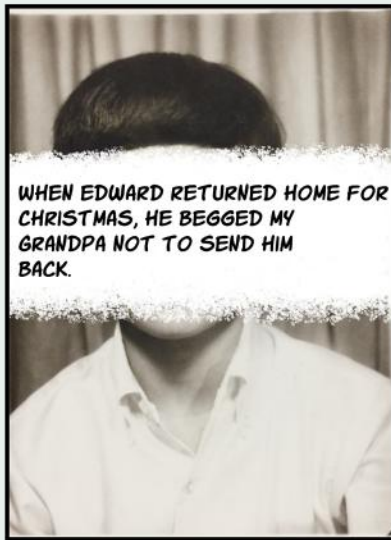
HE WANTED TO BE LIKE JOHN LENNON.



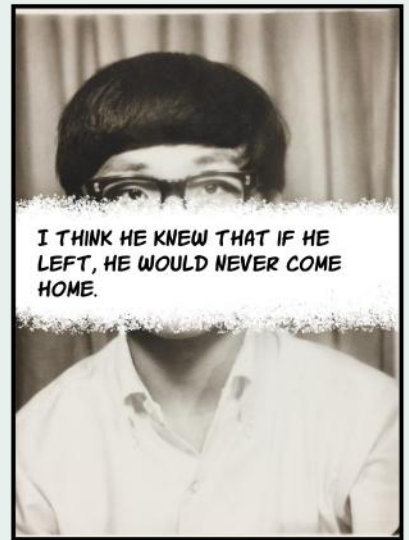
MY GRANDPA DIDN'T LIKE THE PEOPLE EDWARD HUNG OUT WITH, THE PERSON HE WAS BECOMING.



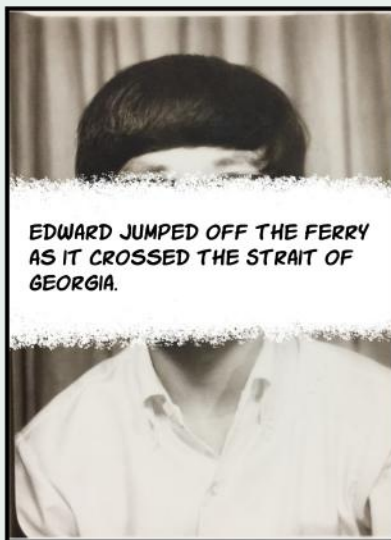
HE SENT EDWARD TO A BOARDING SCHOOL ON THE ISLAND IN THE HOPES OF STRAIGHTENING HIM OUT.



WHEN EDWARD RETURNED HOME FOR CHRISTMAS, HE BEGGED MY GRANDPA NOT TO SEND HIM BACK.



I THINK HE KNEW THAT IF HE LEFT, HE WOULD NEVER COME HOME.



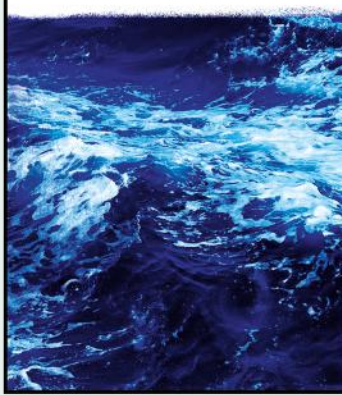
EDWARD JUMPED OFF THE FERRY AS IT CROSSED THE STRAIT OF GEORGIA.



IN MY IMAGINATION, EDWARD IS THE PERFECT UNCLE.



HE TEACHES ME HOW TO PLAY THE GUITAR.



HE TELLS ME NOT TO LISTEN TO MY PARENTS AND GO TO ART SCHOOL.



PEOPLE SAY THAT I LOOK JUST LIKE MY MOM. I HAVE HER EYES AND HER SHOULDERS.



PEOPLE SAY THAT I LOOK JUST LIKE MY AUNT REBECCA. I HAVE HER LIPS AND HER FOREHEAD.



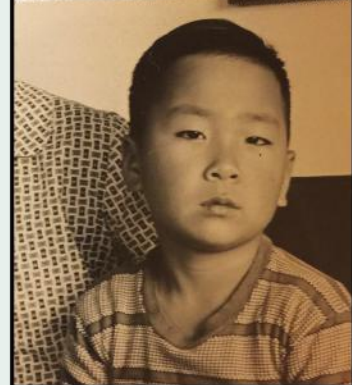
I WONDER WHAT PART OF ME IS LIKE EDWARD?



I WONDER IF PEOPLE LOOKED AT ME FROM JUST THE RIGHT ANGLE...



...WOULD THEY SEE HIM TOO?



If you or someone you know is thinking about suicide, call Talk Suicide Canada at 1-833-456-4566. Support is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. For residents of Quebec, call 1-866-277-3553 or visit [suicide.ca/en](http://suicide.ca/en).



# Future Perfect

*New bylaws for civic spaces*



*Bentway, Toronto 2022*

Future Perfect emerged when two interdisciplinary artist teams, Mia + Eric from Calgary, AB, and Action Hero from Bristol, UK, became interested in the intersection of civic bureaucracy and everyday life. They were fascinated by the prohibitive language of city bylaws, and the opportunities that might lie in shifting that language to create new meaning.

The two teams physically cut up and rearranged bylaws from Calgary, Toronto, Gateshead (England) and Paisley (Scotland). Members of the public were invited to witness, and those closely involved with city policy—urban planners, activists, city officials—were asked to participate alongside the artists. Following the workshops, a selection of these new bylaws was featured on billboards in the cities where the project took place. While billboards have historically been used as marketing tools that lure consumers to project themselves into a particular future—one in which they drive a nice car or smell like sandalwood—Mia + Eric and Action Hero wanted to use the billboards to invite citizens not to consume, but to produce a future city; to see how the language of their own city’s policies could be

transformed and to imagine a collective future, rather than an individual one.

Described as a “dada-meets-municipal-governance project that recycles the dry and officious language of civic bureaucracy to re-construct, re-engineer and rehearse possible futures,” Future Perfect, according to the artists, is a “hopeful, positive act of reconfiguration.” For a world that seems to be in transition, it offers an opportunity to look at the foundations that have been built and use them to imagine possibilities for where to go next. Find out more or create your own bylaws at [futureperfectbyelaws.com](http://futureperfectbyelaws.com).

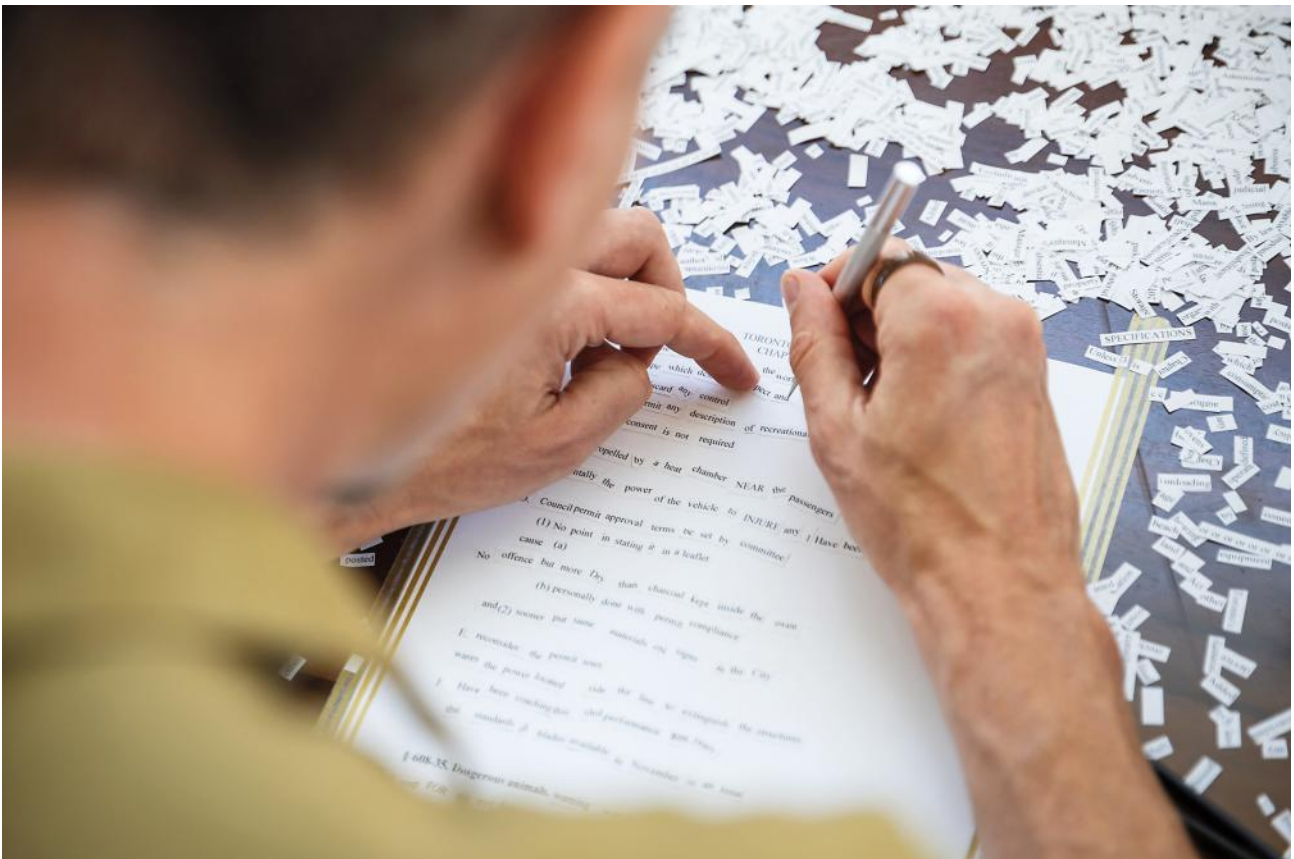
—Tanvi Bhatia

*The collaboration between Action Hero (Bristol, UK) and Mia + Eric (Calgary, AB) was formed after the duos were introduced during an artist double-date in Calgary, and each realized they’d met their artist doppelgangers. They decided to work together as an artistic supergroup and create a project for public space. Find them at [actionhero.org.uk](http://actionhero.org.uk) and [miaanderic.ca](http://miaanderic.ca).*





Workshop Canoe Landing Atrium, Toronto 2022



Re-writing bylaws, Toronto 2022

TORONTO MUNICIPAL CODE  
CHAPTER 743, STREETS AND SIDEWALKS, USE OF

D. net 0 those remedial efforts

Act by Planting a type of Forestry Infrastructure in the mud  
growth occurs in the gutters

E. 1st and Best remedial action

set a side noxious opinion regarding land knowledge

**§ 743-45. Impounding objects and vehicles on streets.**

not another impounded thing

**§ 743-46. Disposing of seized articles.**

A. storage is necessary but time to clear it all out

made a special place for generation of good solid pipes cause the  
equipment Manager benches a lot of weight these days cannot contain it

B. its all flankage and trimmings and curves below the waste

**§ 743-47. Powers and authority of the General Manager.**

A. turning powers over To a tree is the General Manager's roll In this City

(1) powers originally in writing but printed on posters affixed to fences

so trees on Trees

not good for them

(2) was the General Manager not clear

(a) a Council of trees Nothing less

(b) ensure The General Manager of Forestry has a height of

201238 centimetres and a radii of authority without Limitations





*Chinatown, Calgary 2020*



*Fort York Boulevard, Toronto 2022*





*Fort York Boulevard, Toronto 2022*



SHORT STORY

# Things That Scatter

CHARLES BROWN

*Half a breath is all it takes, in or out*





A party when a gun shows up, or police, same thing.

Pellets from a shotgun shell. They increase the likelihood of hitting a target, spread more the further from the gun they get, a desperate act effective up to a point. I've never shot one, never even held one, but I did have one pulled on me once, at my own house a few years into college. My white roommate. It was late at night, and I was locked out. He wasn't answering his phone. I took the spare key from under the mat in the back, and when I opened the door there was a shotgun in my face. We laughed about it over a beer not ten minutes later. I didn't know he had the shotgun. He told me he used it for pigeons. Slew over a hundred of them in one day. *We should go sometime*, he said. I nodded and sank a little further into the couch, my heart still fluttering.

Glass when it's dropped hard enough, thrown. I was nine. Every shard on the floor was a reminder of what I'd just done, a promise of what was to come. It was my white grandma's glass. She wasn't poor, but I hadn't realized that yet. I stepped on one of the shards on purpose, so she wouldn't be as angry with me. It must have cut a nerve, because I didn't feel it at first just saw the blood slowly start to pool. The pain came later. I can still feel a tingle if I think about it now, when I picked my foot up and looked at it, the way my heel separated into two chunks. I went to the ER. Fourteen stitches, and it worked. Grandma wasn't angry with me. I wonder what it feels like to not step on the glass after you've broken it, to toss aside your nerves without ever having to cut them. And what comes later if not pain.

A brain with too much to do.

A brain after a bullet's passed through it.

Carcasses in the middle of a clearing, after the crows have gotten to them. And the crows. The clearing isn't required, but it helps. There's something revelatory about it. That's what I remember feeling first—that could be me. I got close enough to see that it was a turkey. There was much less blood than I expected, but the feathers were everywhere. And the bones. There was still meat on them. And then it hit me that I might have scared something bigger than crows away. And then I was running. Fast as I could through a field in New Mexico, not thirteen years old. *That's life*, mom said when I told her. And she was right, then. When I went back the next day, the carcass was gone. The skull was all that remained, picked clean. I played with it, and when I was done I threw it against a tree to see if it'd break. Only now, after seeing the countless chalk outlines of Black people murdered on the news, can I look back on the meadow, on the turkey skull flying white through the air, and see the stain.

The soul as droplets after a sneeze. Bless you.

A body gone to ash. I threw my mom to the wind too early. That's what everyone says. It's how she wanted to be spread. She had that much time, at least. The time to decide. She wasn't even fifty. We climbed a small mountain behind the property Grandma owned in Arizona, got to the very top, and threw her off. She was packed so tightly in the urn she stuck to it. By the time we finished spreading her ashes,

the whole family had her under our nails. I didn't notice until my sister pointed it out. I was too busy watching her draw patterns in the wind. I was too busy pretending she didn't want to leave us, that she was somehow right there.

A small pile of leaves after a gust of wind has moved through them.

Dandelions. A friend, AJ from my flag football team, gave me one after a game, broke its stem and handed it to me. We were ten. Half a breath is all it takes, in or out. I sent the seeds flying. Some of them landed in his hair, and we laughed. He pulled a dandelion and blew it back at me. A dandelion war. That was the last time I saw AJ, end of the season. His dad picked him up, and as they left, his dad asked if I was Black. Yes, I said. He gave me a nod, and I sat blowing dandelions until my own dad came, watching what felt to me like thousands of their seeds hover and twirl and fade into nothingness. I gave my dad the same nod AJ's dad had given me. My dad's gummy smile back was all I needed. He knew. A few weeks later, he was arrested and jailed for the third time. I didn't see him very often after that. The pappus of a dandelion allows air to flow up through it, creates a bubble of low air pressure called a vortex ring. It's an efficient flight, full of purpose, but to me then, they were just helpless little white seeds, the part of me that I could never be, blowing away in the wind.

Lawn gnats as you run through a field of grass.

Mesquite beans when they fall.

Lovers. For so many different reasons. The reasons, when you look at them. We were in our twenties. The timing wasn't right. I was in a relationship, and if I was going to leave one lover for another, it had better be for a woman of colour, I told myself. I'd learned better. We met at a soccer field late one night. Smoked in the bleachers and hardly said a word to one another. I told her I was going to break into a car. She came with, didn't tell me the car I chose was hers. I smashed the window. She couldn't stop laughing. When I left we brushed fingertips. I apologized for the next two years while she was in my orbit, every time I saw her. She never asked me to stop, and she always said it was okay. I was lying to myself. If I was going to leave for anyone it would have been her. For many more reasons besides, but always, at least in part, because she was white.

Water droplets on a mirror after I run my thumb across the bristles of a toothbrush, and my face inside them.

Light when it collides with anything, though with varying intensity, so that everything I see is partial. Always running. Delicate enough to brush your fingers through a beam of it. Delicate enough to burn. It doesn't happen often, me getting burned. The summer it did for the first time, I spent weeks in the sun. I'd finally learned how white my skin could get by staying out of it—not white enough—and now I wanted to see how dark I could get. Every time I went out to play that summer, I took my shirt off. When my mom asked if I wanted sunscreen, I told her I didn't burn, *only tanned*. And I didn't. Until I did. Spent the last week of my sixteenth summer barely moving, my mom applying aloe vera harvested from the plant in



our yard to my upper body daily. It took a lot to burn though, and that felt good. I ended that summer darker than I'd ever been. The aloe survived all that use, too. Hardy things.

Clothes. Mom told me to put them away so I threw them all over the room. It was her third time telling me in as many minutes, and I was fed up. White kid from down the street was headed over, yes, but we were going to play outside. I didn't understand why I couldn't just clean them up later. *Clean house won't change the fact that we're poor*, I said before slamming the door on my way out while mom vacuumed the living room carpet. Except we weren't poor. We had Grandma. When I got back late that night, my clothes were hung up. Mom never said anything about it, but my first job a few months later was in retail, and every job after that for a while, and sometimes I wonder if I was trying to make up for that day. Some part of me grew to understand what my mom was doing. And that if she had to do it as a white woman, it'd be even more important for me. I kept my closet roy-g-biv'd after that and it stayed full of the popular brands, Sean John and Ecko Unltd, my Jordans down below. But I was still a kid. Mom never stopped asking me to clean my room when company was coming by. I never stopped saying no.

Electrons if a magnetic field is present.

Memory.

My idea of a person across time. The kid who left a handprint in the concrete block of my old house. A name scratched into the underside of a table. A note in the margin of a book. How many ways I pictured him, that kid. Eric was his name. First with dry hands from the concrete. He applied lotion for days afterward. He was a mixed kid, because that's what I knew. Lived a normal life. Mattered to people. I don't know why, but he was a singer. He liked Usher and Sisqó. We might have been friends. I wonder how many other lives Eric has lived that aren't his own. In the minds of people who saw his handprint, or passed by him in the grocery store. And I wonder if any of those other existences matter. If he had a list of them, moments where others knew him, however briefly, would he recognize himself?

I don't think I would. I think I can only know myself through the way in which I know others, not the other way around. I spread out among them, endless you's, in search of myself. Maybe that's the power of scattering, not the running or the covering more surface area or the sadness. It's the scattering itself. Or the moment just before. The power is in my ability to bend down, rip a flower from its stem and throw the petals out across a stream.

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*Charles Brown is a writer from Arizona. He received his MFA from the University of British Columbia and now lives in Northwestern Washington where he spends his days scheming his return to Vancouver. His writing has appeared or is forthcoming in numerous publications. Find him on Twitter @youfoundcharles.*

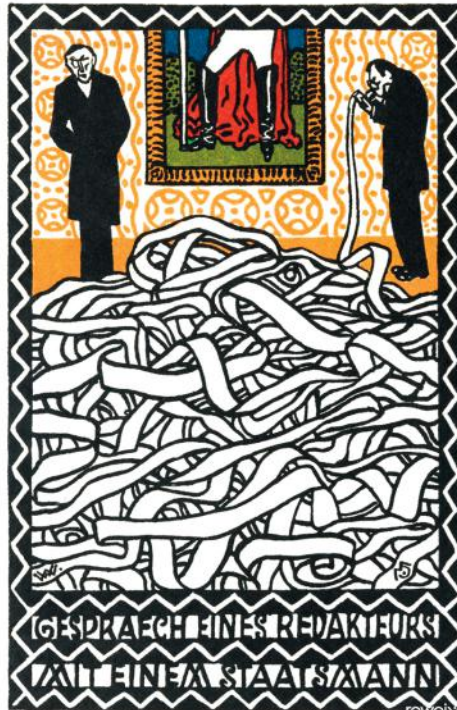
## In Search of a Phrase

STEPHEN HENIGHAN

*Phrase books are tools of cultural globalization—but they are also among its casualties*

Between the second and the fifteenth centuries, Europe and Asia were tied together, via the Middle East, by a network of trading routes on land and sea known as the Silk Road. This network of commercial relationships allowed cultural knowledge to travel back and forth across Eurasia. The transfer of knowledge generated new cultural forms. One quirky, though not inconsequential, product of the Silk Road was the phrase book. Many travellers wrote down words from the languages they encountered and arranged them into lists for the benefit of future traders. A manuscript produced in the tenth century appears to be a phrase book for Tibetan Buddhist monks travelling to China; it lists words for food, tools and weapons. A Tibetan-Sanskrit phrase book from the same era contains useful phrases such as *I do not like my provisions*.

Refined during the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance, the phrase book has changed little over the centuries. In 1607, in the city of Pskov in northwest Russia, a German named Tönnies Fonne wrote a German-Russian phrase book for the benefit of fellow traders from northern Germany's Hanseatic League. In a 2014



study of Fonne's phrasebook, the Dutch linguist Pepijn Hendriks writes: "The arrangement of this seventeenth-century phrase book is not very different from that of modern-day phrase books: it presents the user with long lists of vocabulary, gives a small grammatical compendium and contains handy phrases." This formula will be familiar to anyone who has picked up a phrase book before going on vacation. I encountered my first phrase book

when I was fifteen and my parents were planning to rent a house in rural Italy. I have little memory of the book; for me, the highlight was the accompanying cassette. After supper we would play the cassette and listen to Italian phrases and their English translations. The Italian was high, mellifluous and difficult to capture; it was the English, delivered in a firm, almost reprimanding British accent, that stuck in our minds. We walked around our apartment repeating phrases like *There is no room at this hotel* or *You are going the wrong way*. None of us learned much Italian.

Undeterred by this unsuccessful first experience, I've since become a collector of these tiny books that are too small to stand upright on my bookshelves. There is the Turkish phrase book whose words I was unable to pronounce and the Greek one that was superfluous because all the Greeks replied in English. There is the Cantonese phrase book that my partner was given in Hong Kong by a friend who wanted to make the point that for many Hong Kong residents, Mandarin is a foreign language and one that they do not welcome. The friend's gesture



was a reminder that phrase books are always political: they situate the user, set boundaries for the traveller's relationships with local residents, and define the country in terms of which regional, ethnic or class variant of its language is presented to visitors. In the 1990s, when I was living in London and following the disintegration of former Yugoslavia, I made regular visits to Grant and Cutler, a bookshop famous for its foreign-language section. Over the course of the war, the Serbo-Croatian phrase book was divided into separate Serbian and Croatian volumes; a few months later, a Bosnian phrase book appeared nestled alongside them, signalling a further cultural splintering. The variations in phrasing among these three volumes—negligible to an outsider's eyes—reflected desperate assertions of identity.

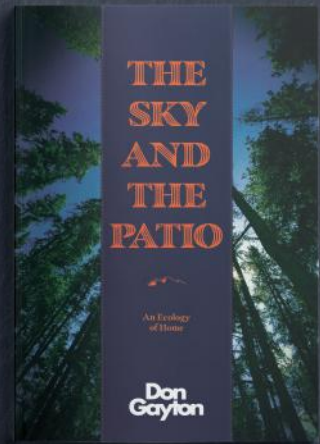
The phrase book that I've put to the greatest use, and the one that showed me how much instruction can be extracted from these small volumes when circumstances demand it, is the Hungarian phrase book I bought in early 1989, when I travelled around Hungary by myself for a month. Under communism, travellers from non-communist countries were obliged to check in at the tourist office of each town they visited, be assigned a place to spend the night and obtain a visa stamp attesting that they had slept in government-approved accommodation. In Budapest, few people spoke Western languages; outside the capital, almost nobody did. As I travelled through eastern Hungary, I depended entirely on my phrase book. I studied it every night. I learned the numbers from one to a thousand to buy train tickets and tell waiters in small-town restaurants how much of a tip to add to my bill. I memorized every phrase related to train travel and strained to understand the tinny-sounding Hungarian announcements when changing trains in remote stations. By the end of the month, I had a vocabulary

of three hundred words—yet, like even the most assiduous phrase book users, I knew little grammar.

With the end of the Cold War, phrase books multiplied. Lonely Planet alone has produced over 120 of them, many for non-official languages. In a 2017 study, the linguist Richard W. Hallett criticized Lonely Planet's phrase books for presenting English as a neutral norm and exoticizing other languages, particularly those of the South Pacific. Yet phrase books are not only tools of cultural globalization; they are also among its potential casualties. Many young Europeans, brought up to speak to people from other European countries in English, no longer use them. In Russia a few years ago, I watched Chinese tourists order fast food from Russian attendants via cellphone translation apps. North American tourists now find English-speaking waiters and hotel receptionists in many countries. This convenience conceals a loss. From the Silk Road onward, the creation of phrase books was powered by commercial interest, illusions of cultural superiority *and* curiosity. Did the Tibetan monk who learned the Mandarin word for horses, the Hanseatic trader who picked up a few phrases of Russian or the American tourist who learned how to order a cappuccino in Italy revel in their new knowledge? Every now and then, I'm convinced, these apparently dispensable volumes opened the door to realms of new experience, fresh ways of looking at the world. The elimination of such possibilities for growth should give a traveller pause each time a server in another country asks them for their order in English.

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*Stephen Henighan's most recent novel is The World of After. Read more of his work at [stephenhenighan.com](http://stephenhenighan.com) and [geist.com](http://geist.com). Follow him on Twitter @StephenHenighan.*



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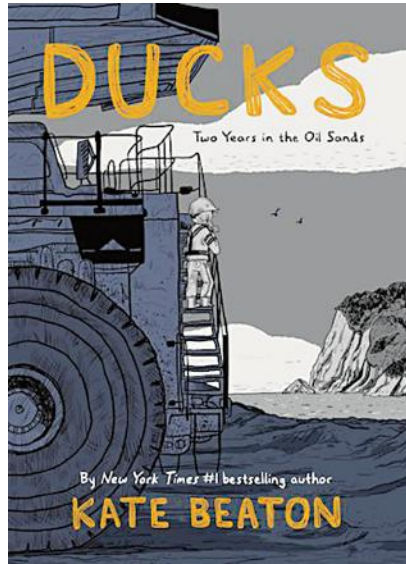
'Armstrong is a natural storyteller. As an entertaining and essential historical document of Canadian punk *Guilty of Everything's* only shortcoming is its length.'  
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# ENDNOTES

REVIEWS, COMMENTS, CURIOSA

## ROCKS IN A HARD PLACE

Last fall, my parents and I drove up to the Thompson region of BC, between Cache Creek and Kamloops, to spend some time rockhounding, a dormant hobby of mine reinvigorated by the need to find a new outdoor pastime during the pandemic. Armed with a copy of Rick Hudson's *A Field Guide to Gold, Gemstone & Mineral Sites of British Columbia, Volume Two: Sites within a Day's Drive of Vancouver* (Harbour Publishing) and flush with success of the day previous, sifting quartz nodules and eye agate from a slide near Kamloops, we turned off the Trans Canada to look for a site containing moss agate. We soon realized the pitfalls of being guided by a book first published before the millennium, as Back Valley Road had been repaved and the number of bridges we were told to anticipate (five; "park at the fifth road bridge") had since been reduced to just one. We squinted between the map in the book and our GPS, and approximated where to pull off. We forded Cache Creek and clambered up to the service road on the other side, which was scrubby with sagebrush and loud with crickets. As we walked, we tried to match the directions in the book to our surroundings. We turned up the likeliest valley, passing a herd of loose cows, but could not find the "somewhat hidden rock slide" that was supposed to house the agate. Nervous about being up the wrong valley, we turned back, happy with the adventure even if we didn't have any spoils to show for it. I've since used Hudson's book many times to scope out the types of rocks available in the areas I'm trav-



elling to in southern BC (although now always cross-referenced with more recent sources, including *Roadside Geology of Southern British Columbia* by Bill Mathews and Jim Monger). Besides detailing hundreds of known mineral locations using maps, directions, GPS coordinates and comments about the volcanic history of the location, Hudson provides essential information on getting started as a rockhound, including what to wear and bring, land access rights, safety tips, how to stake a claim, rockhounding ethics and an identification guide on the rocks you might find. There's also, charmingly, from my perspective in 2022, a step-by-step guide to accessing mineral maps on the internet. Despite being out-of-date on some details—to be expected in a book describing the physical geography of wilderness—I carry Hudson's book with me on every rock-hunting trip.

—Kelsea O'Connor

## SITTING DUCKS

**Ducks: Two Years in the Oil Sands** (Drawn & Quarterly) is an unsparing new graphic memoir from Kate Beaton, who some *Geist* readers may know from *Hark! A Vagrant*, the award-winning webcomic which showcased Beaton's delightfully skewed sense of humour. Beaton's keen eye for detail is still evident in *Ducks*, but there is also a definite step up in seriousness. For two years, between 2005 and 2008, Beaton was one of the thousands of workers who migrated from all corners of Canada (and further afield) to the oil sands of northern Alberta, in search of well-paid work. Beaton, twenty-one years old at the time, had travelled from her home in Mabou, on Cape Breton, hoping to earn sufficient money to pay off her student loans. The conditions in the oil camps around Fort McMurray were extreme: bitter cold, isolation and loneliness. And for Beaton there were also the persistent—and unwanted—attentions of an overwhelmingly male work force, a constant flow of sexist comments and innuendo that female workers were expected to laugh off, or risk being labelled (and ostracized) as "bitches" or worse. The result of this was a gradual grinding down of the spirit, which Beaton captures perfectly in her memoir. Like Kate Braid's *Journeywoman* (2012) before it, *Ducks: Two Years in the Oil Sands* is an important addition to the growing body of work documenting the uphill battles faced by women who are trying to establish themselves in fields that have long been dominated by men.

—Michael Hayward



## A THOUGHTFUL POSSESSION

**The Penguin Book of Japanese Short Stories** (Penguin Random House) is a new compendium edited and translated by Jay Rubin, with an introduction by Haruki Murakami, that aims to guide its readers through several hundred years of Japanese short fiction in several hundred pages. Is this a “greatest hits” collection? Not so much. To quote from Rubin’s editorial note, the reader “can be assured that all the works have been chosen because the editor has been unable to forget them, in some cases for decades.” Which is a wonderful rubric to score fiction against. This is not essential reading dictated by a college syllabus; instead, it was Rubin’s intention to collect stories which draw the reader into their emotional depths and keep them there, held so firmly that at times it might seem impossible to escape. These are stories written by people who have lived, and not in the passive definition of the word: people who have known life and its joys, known its great stretches of boredom, its violent terrors and its most subtle moments. These authors have traversed the vast territories of life and have returned to share that which most possessed their thoughts. To this end their work succeeds admirably, and this collection will have its readers similarly possessed as they become lost within its pages.

—Jonathan Heggen

## FURTHER YEARS OF SOLITUDE

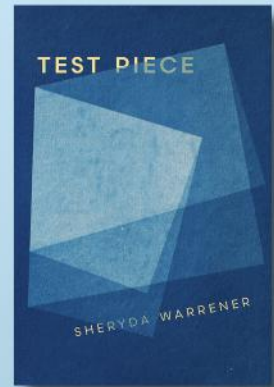
I picked up Miguel Bonnefoy’s **Black Sugar** (Gallic Books)—translated from the French by Emily Boyce—when I visited the new bookstore Upstart & Crow on Granville Island in Vancouver. I fell into the story immediately, feeling as if I had jumped back into Gabriel García Márquez’s *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. *Black Sugar* is also set in a remote village in a tropical rainforest, where connections with the coast and the outside

world seem to have been severed so long ago that villagers find it absurd to think that the notorious privateer Henry Morgan’s lost treasure might be buried somewhere nearby. Each time travellers seeking Morgan’s fabled treasure come to the village, they bring with them snippets from the modern world at large. What I love about reading this kind of story is seeing how many nuggets of history I can prospect from the fable-like prose. There’s truth in the tale, but facts as well, with the facts being the embellishment. There’s a lushness to stories like Bonnefoy’s that I wish North Americans weren’t so standoffish towards. In contrast to Márquez’s sprawling novels, Bonnefoy is able to rein in his story, exploring just a few strands of thought. *Black Sugar* is a rich but short read, and if I were asked to suggest an introduction to the world of magic realism, this is certainly one of the options that I’d recommend. —Anson Ching

## DREAMING OF ANDROIDS

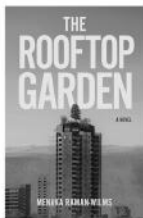
I found a copy of Philip K. Dick’s **Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?** (Ballantine Books) on a bench outside the local grocery store. It was a beat-up copy, with highlighting throughout. Whenever I came across a highlighted line, I wondered: Did I ruin some student’s day when I picked up their lost textbook? Did they eventually have to request an extension on their essay? Knowing that this novel is the basis for the movie *Blade Runner*, I kept trying to figure out: “Who is who?” and “Why did they change things?” For example: there are no sheep in the movie, electric or otherwise. In the novel, most of the animals have become extinct following the war and the dust, and as a result, live animals have become valuable status symbols. Those who cannot afford live animals keep mechanical ones, pretending that they are real. The Voight-Kampff test, which tests for empathetic response, helps to distinguish between androids and humans. Androids are not

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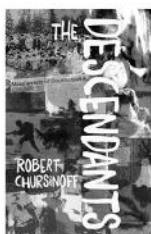
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capable of empathy—but perhaps humans are losing this ability as well. In one key scene, Pris, an android, cuts the legs off a spider, because she can't imagine why it would need so many to walk around. When I read this scene, I was horrified—even though the day before, I'd squished a spider that I'd found in my closet. Meanwhile, Rick Deckard, an android bounty hunter who has begun to feel empathy for his victims, doesn't understand why J.R. Isidore, the victim of a eugenics program, has set the spider free. "You ought to keep it in a jar," Deckard tells Isidore. "You could have gotten a hundred and some odd dollars for it." Which prompts us to ask: which of them is the most human? Who has the greater empathy?

—*Debby Reis*

## TEENAGED BOYS, CLOSE UP

For a close-up look at teenaged boy culture, check out the Canadian film, **Sleeping Giant** (directed by Andrew Cividino and written by Cividino, Blain Watters and Aaron Yeger). *Sleeping Giant* follows three teenaged boys as they hang around together in cottage country, on the edge of Lake Superior. The boys bike all over the place, shoot golf balls into the lake, throw eggs at houses, shoplift from the corner store and generally hang out on the edge of trouble. Adam is an only child who is staying with his parents in their roomy, modern cottage and Nate and Riley are cousins who, due to some sort of parental problems, are staying with their grandmother in her tiny cottage. The boys are all knees and elbows, crooked teeth (except for Adam) and permanent hat hair, and they're at the mercy of their hormones and their big mouths. Nate is a bundle of raw emotions, which he expresses through aggressive language and risky behaviour, and it is he who can see the disparities between his life and that of the happy families that laugh and cheer during the egg-and-spoon races at the community sports

day. Riley is more even-tempered and is interested in how Adam's family lives, but wants to remain loyal to Nate, and Adam is a naive city boy who watches and then mimics his new friends. The boys' interactions are a combination of playfulness, insults, semi-serious wrestling and daring each other to do stupid or dangerous things. Right from the start, when we see Nate alone in Adam's cottage, wandering around and just looking at things, we can feel how close he is to doing something impulsive and possibly destructive, and this feeling stays with us as we see the boys manipulate each other through lies and exaggeration until something really bad happens and everyone, including the audience, wishes they didn't have to learn that lesson the hard way. The three young actors seem so natural that they don't appear to be acting at all, the dialogue is spare and concise, the understated soundtrack is mostly sounds from nature and the scenery is breathtaking. You can watch this great movie on Netflix. —*Patty Osborne*

## FUTURE IMPERFECT

One of the best episodes in the third season of *The Crown* dramatized the 1966 landslide in the Welsh mining town of Aberfan. Heavy rain had caused a mountain of coal waste to liquefy, washing down a slope to overwhelm part of the town. A school lay directly in its path; heartbreakingly, 116 of the 144 fatalities were young children. *The Crown* does not mention it, but apparently, the day before the disaster, one of the children spoke of a dream she had had involving a dark shadow overwhelming her school. This and other premonitory stories attracted the attention of John Barker, a psychiatrist with a professional interest in the paranormal. When he made a public appeal for similar stories, seventy-six people responded. This led to the creation of the premonitions bureau at the



*Evening Standard* newspaper in London. People were urged to contact the paper with their stories of deaths foretold, plane crashes predicted, storms anticipated and so on. The idea was to establish a warning system—a sort of DEW Line for catastrophes—that would allow government to respond to disasters before they happened. **The Premonitions Bureau** (Penguin Random House) by Sam Knight, a staff writer at the *New Yorker*, is the strange story of what Barker and his journalist colleague, Peter Fairley, discovered. The short answer: not much. Barker believed that the ability to foretell the future was present in a significant proportion of humans, like left-handedness. But in practice, sorting out the cranks from the gifted (and there were some) turned out to be more difficult than anticipated and the bureau faded away without success. Knight is a wonderful writer. His sentences are clear, vivid, charming, sometimes quirky in a good way. It is a subject that could easily be made fun of, but he presents it seriously, though never ponderously. The book raises many questions: What is the difference between premonition and coincidence? How can the future be foretold if it hasn't happened yet? In what sense does the future even exist? And, as you might expect, it manages to answer none of them.

—Daniel Francis

### WHAT IT MEANS TO BE HUMAN

In 2018, *Geist* published a poem titled “Grief” by Geoff Inverarity, and an unusual thing happened. Readers shared it with people they knew who were grieving. “Grief’s a bastard / turns up no notice on the doorstep whenever / moves in doesn’t shower doesn’t shave / won’t do dishes / dirty laundry / eats badly spends hours in the bathroom / keeps you awake half the night.” *Geist* also shared another poem, “My Mother’s Haunting,” from the



same collection. In the poem, the speaker comes home after his mother’s death to find that she has labelled everything: the spare bedding (dated when last washed), food in the freezer, knitted squares made from leftover wool (now sewn as blankets to be donated). “We have reached the point where all there is left to do is find one bag big enough to cover the whole house and all the rest of us in it and write out a label that says ‘This is my house, these are my children, and this is my husband. I will never leave.’” His mother had survived WWII and was ready for whatever was coming next. And the things do come in Inverarity’s **All the Broken Things** (Anvil): flying saucers, Godzilla, Elvis and two air-headed radio hosts offering us a traffic report during the end of it all. (Will we have traffic reports at the end? Apparently, yes.) And then there’s the poem about a dog who can’t quite figure out who the good boy really is. *All the Broken Things* was shortlisted for the 2022 Fred Kerner Book Award. Here is an excerpt from what the judges had to say: “*All the Broken Things* is an original and sublimely startling rumination on what it means to be human in all its heartbreaking and complicated beauty, in years gone by, now and beyond.”

—Peggy Thompson



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## WANDA X 3

I finally got around to watching Barbara Loden's 1970 film **Wanda** (Criterion), a film I'd been hearing about for ages. Made at a time where there were few active women directors, and fewer still who could find funding for a feature-length independent film, Loden wrote the screenplay for, acted in, and directed a thoroughly absorbing film in which the central figure is a complicated woman who is not just the foil for a leading man. Nathalie Léger's **Suite for Barbara Loden** is a book-length meditation on Loden, her film and the themes which thread through it. *Suite* is translated from the French by Natasha Lehrer and Cécile Menon, and published by the Dorothy Project, a feminist small press based in St. Louis, Missouri, named for "its editor's great-aunt Dorothy Traver, a librarian, rose gardener, animal lover, children's book author and bookmobile driver." In the book, we learn that Loden saw herself in Wanda Goronski, her film's central

character, and that the screenplay was based on the newspaper account of a woman who, convicted of being an accomplice to bank robbery, thanked the judge for her twenty-year sentence. "What pain, what hopelessness could make a person desire to be put away? How could imprisonment be relief?" The third of our Wandas is **Wanda**, a novella by the late Barbara Lambert, set in BC's Okanagan at the start of WWII, and published by Fish Gotta Swim Editions. Lambert's *Wanda* is a brash seven-year-old refugee from the London Blitz, who arrives in the Okanagan Valley "like something [the young narrator] Eva might have imagined, conjuring a friend out of loneliness." The two young girls get to know each other as they wander, small observers of a community trying to adjust to "a time when suspicion is rife and Canadians of varied origins are subjected to the steeping prejudices of a small Interior town." *Wanda* is proof that you don't need six hundred pages to tell a

good story: sometimes a slim novella is the perfect length.

—Michael Hayward

## PRAYER AND DECLARATION

Manahil Bandukwala's debut poetry book, **Monument** (Brick Books), begins with Arjumand, the Persian noblewoman later known as Mumtaz Mahal, Empress to the Emperor Shah Jahan. Mumtaz Mahal's famous tomb, the Taj Mahal, is neither the subject nor setting of these poems, but a shadowy presence that waxes and wanes throughout. *Monument* undertakes one hell of a challenge: turning the monumental into the momentary. Yet, Bandukwala achieves it with a lyrical precision that makes us forget linear history and enter a world where memory of the future is possible. In her poem, "Before, it was love," the poet sketches a decolonial portrait of love: "If love is an empire, reel conquest back in." The poem braids sixteenth-century India with present day and confronts us with the continuity of urgent conversations: "So why wait; give the land back, now." It takes a badass poet to collapse time the way Bandukwala does, and her poem "Restart, After Animal Crossing" is a testament to this. Here, she threads the futility of playing a Simulation Management video game during the pandemic with the building of the Taj Mahal, in a way that just makes sense. The accompanying drawings by Natalie Olsen detail an upside-down Taj Mahal that slowly crumbles throughout the book. Bandukwala's words cut through stone to free "Mumtaz Mahal" from the monumental and return her to herself, as Arjumand. Pages make for a better home than a tomb, and within them Arjumand is given the grace of personal intimacy: "For a few brief days / there was no emperor, / no consort— / only two people in love under a monsoon." This book is much more than a collection of poems—it is a radical reimagining of biography, love letters, prayer and declaration. —April Thompson





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# The GEIST Cryptic Crossword

Prepared by Meandricus

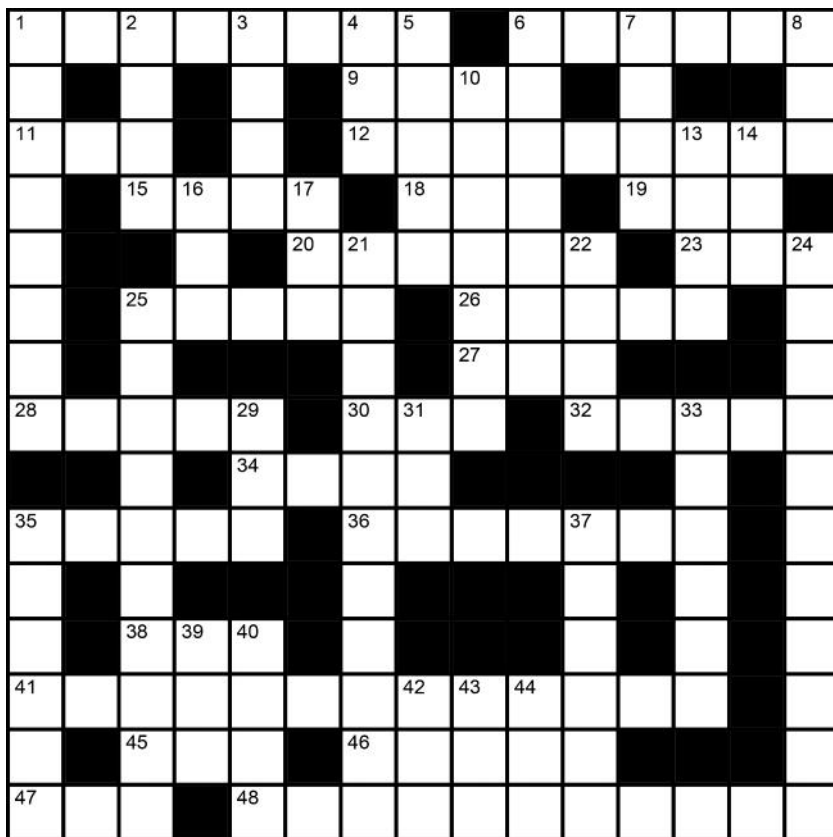
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A winner will be selected at random from correct solutions and will be awarded a one-year subscription to *Geist* or a *Geist* magnet.

## ACROSS

- 1 After 10 years, he's become one of the effete
- 6 That mansion seems to have its own sovereign persona, doesn't it?
- 9 That's odd, I think that Roman princess might have been ridiculous
- 11 It's about time your wife changed her address! (abbrev)
- 12 Ted, ragmen are always wearing mismatched clothes
- 15 In the beginning, her greeting came from a place of pain and turmoil
- 18 Let's tear the place up now that she's in the deepest sleep
- 19 In Egypt the king's disapproval was audible
- 20 Imagine the place where art died
- 23 Why is the black sheep always the noisy one?
- 25 Hey Liz, while we walk would you like a cig or not?
- 26 As usual, we got mixed up in a lot of fiestas in that island state
- 27 When Werner put our minds to it, he could get control, especially in Ontario (abbrev)
- 28 I don't think you can watch the sleepy drug dealer on Acorn
- 30 It wouldn't be forever and with your hang-ups, you couldn't be sent away (abbrev)
- 32 She seems to be committed to swear words
- 34 You soooo deserve some help, so mind the gap!
- 35 Tim likes the elaborate version but down south the King likes the streamlined one
- 36 When a majestic plural sounds like highclass urine (2)
- 38 Short but outdated communication system (abbrev)
- 41 Mess up the bed linen, Doris, and put on the kettle. The New Englanders are coming for supper! (2)
- 45 Remember where they resisted playing golf and then blocked access to the suburbs?
- 46 That lousy sucker loves my cannabis
- 47 The short wintergreen girl loved the rain, but not in winter



48 Chuck's gang finds all 30 of the grounds fairly loamy (2)

## DOWN

- 1 In Toronto, the bank closed on the first day to celebrate our common wealth
- 2 According to June, John was always crowing about his current assets
- 3 Monty always made one at the card game
- 4 The woman who lives next to Westmount is divine! (abbrev)
- 5 Lilibet's raita was famous but her millinery garnishes were controversial
- 6 That puffed up fellow plays great Sumo Pop, doesn't he?
- 7 She let me borrow her car for more than a month last spring
- 8 His only friend left the doors open when she died
- 10 My dentist practises her French verbs every day
- 13 When at the baths, don't eat ice cream
- 14 We're still waiting for AC—no idea when it will get here (abbrev)
- 16 Don't alter yourself
- 17 Let that stove fall behind
- 21 May we still celebrate Vicky long after her 2-4 win? (2)
- 22 Up here the eastern ocean is an agreeable body of water (abbrev)
- 24 Those hoity-toity folks often display bad judgement or a scarcity of brains
- 25 How did that Ontario con man manage to get an invite to a street party in Manchester?

29 Let's just decide to go out

31 In Vancouver you get your own room! (abbrev)

33 Those specially camouflaged cloths from Scotland are too good for Harris

35 They had a bad run of luck when they lived in the durbs.

37 When you add ale to the upper class, they can get quite musical

39 That minstrel show performer had his own club, and that's no bull!

40 Did Edward and Norman also have daughters who drove them nuts?

42 Don't be bitter just because you can't do the fruity hop! (abbrev)

43 When we Canucks go three miles down, things can get sticky (abbrev)

44 Can you figure out how to track Canadian money in Quebec? (abbrev)



Solution to Puzzle 121



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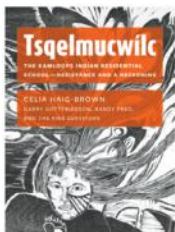
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